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SIR WALTER SCOTT

WITH A SHORT BIOGRAPHY BY

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AND

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY

J. THORNTON, M.A.

NEW IMPRESSION

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NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA

1911

SIR WALTER SCOTT

WALTER SCOTT, the great novelist and poet, was born in the narrow black street called College Wynd, in the old town of Edinburgh, on 15th August, 1771. On the ground where that street stood had been a house in which the husband of Mary Queen of Scots was murdered, more than two hundred years before the poet's birth. His father was a lawyer, of an ancient and noble family, descended from the Scotts of Harden, who were famous fighters and robbers on the Border, when Scotland and England were separate and unfriendly nations. The baby Walter was born also on a borderland of time and change. People were leaving the ancient and filthy lanes of the old town of Edinburgh for new streets in new quarters, and Scott's parents moved to the broad and airy George's Square, almost in the country. In other ways everything was changing. The Highland clans who fought in 1745 for Prince Charles and the exiled Royal Family of Scotland against the German Kings of England, the Georges, had become peaceful. As Scott grew up he knew many of the men who had been victorious in 1745, and were beaten at Culloden in 1746, and it was his joy to collect their old stories of battle and of adventure. Till he was eighteen months old he was a very strong child, but then a lameness fell on his right foot which never could be cured. He became a very strong man, could lift enormous weights, and was a bold or even rash rider, but he was always lame, and could not be a soldier in the great wars against Napoleon, which was what he wanted to be.

Scott's first memory of anything was of being at his grandfather's house, Sandy Knowe, beside the tall old tower of Smailholme, on a cliff above a little lake, near the Tweed. From this cliff you see over all the country which Scott made so famous : the three purple peaks of Eildon Hill, haunted by the Fairy Queen ; the ruined abbey of Dryburgh, where he is buried ; Melrose and its abbey ; the plain where English and Scots had fought so many battles ; in the south the blue Cheviot Hills, with England on the farther side ; in the north the hills of Yarrow and Ettrick, where his ancestors had lived, fought and hidden the cattle they robbed out of England.

Here Scott, still a child of about three years old, heard from his grandfather the stories of the old fighting days, which he later put into his novels and poems ; and he learned the ballads about battles, ghosts, and fairies which the country people had made for themselves to sing in winter evenings. He had already learned to read, beginning with some ballads that had been printed. His nurse one day left him alone in the hills, a great thunderstorm came on, and the child was found lying alone on his back, clapping his hands at the flashes of lightning, and crying, “Bonny ! bonny !”

Before he was four Scott was taken to Bath for his health, and he thought that he first learned to read there, which is perhaps more likely. He returned to Edinburgh when he was six ; a clever lady met him and said : “He has the most extraordinary genius for a boy I ever saw.” He said that he was a “virtuoso.” “What is a virtuoso ?” said his aunt. “Don’t you know, it is one who wishes to know, and will know everything.” “Why don’t you go out and play with these boys, Walter ?” said somebody who found him reading. “You can’t think how ignorant these boys are,” said Walter, who already knew more than any of the grown-up people *about the things he wanted to know about*. But these things were stories and poetry, fights and fairies, giants, ladies, knights and dwarfs, not his school lessons. He got a pony

and rode over the hills, seeing the place where the Fairy Queen carried the wizard into Fairyland, and the field where his ancestors turned again on their enemies, the Kers, after a defeat, and all the other scenes which he made famous.

But when he was sent to the High School at Edinburgh he was better at fights with the boys than at grammar, which, whether in Latin or English, he never, all his life, knew much about. He got to the top of his class when a question was asked that nobody else knew, and he fell from place to place when questions were asked that everybody knew except himself. When he got into a fight, he and the other boy fought *sitting*, because of his lameness, on benches opposite each other. He always fell asleep during sermons in church, but, when the boys were asked about the sermon, he answered best, for he remembered the text, and invented, out of his own head, what the preacher was bound to say. He was the story-teller of the school, making up, already, novels that never were written.

There was no cricket in Scotland at that time, and he was too lame for football, but he and a friend took long walks with books in their pockets, which they read among the hills. They learned Italian for the sake of the poetry and stories, and German for the same reason, but Scott utterly refused to learn Greek, for which he was sorry afterwards. Mr. Stevenson, the author of *Treasure Island*, was exactly like Scott in these things, both were clever, idle boys, who never worked except at what they were not expected to learn. Indeed, Scott's father, an honest man, said that he "would never be better than a *gangrel scrapegit*," which means "a wandering fiddler." When Scott was fifteen he entered his father's office as an apprentice. His business was to copy law papers, and as he wrote very fast, and worked very hard, he made a little money which he spent on books and on old things, swords and Highland dirks (or daggers) and engravings. Though he was so idle he could read Latin,

French, German, Italian, and Spanish, which he picked up in studying novels, and histories, and poems in these languages. His handwriting was very small and close. If you look at the written copy of one of his novels, made to be printed from, you see that one of the pages makes five pages of the printed book ; and you also see that he never stopped to make any corrections or improvements, he just wrote straight on. Shakespeare was said by the actors to work in the same way : it is not certain about Shakespeare, but it is true about Scott. When he was fifteen he met the poet Burns at a party. Burns asked who wrote a piece of poetry printed on the margin of an engraving. None of the learned people who were there knew, but of course Scott did, and whispered it to a friend who told Burns. They never met again. The extraordinary thing is that the name of the author of the poetry is printed under the lines, for I have the engraving.

Scott now studied Law at the College of Edinburgh, which is partly built on the ground where stood the house in which he was born. “ You may take him for a poor lamiter ” (lame man), said a naval officer who knew him, “ but he is the first to begin a row, and the last to end it.” He was then a big untidy lad, in corduroy trousers, and was called “ Colonel Grogg.”

But now Scott fell in love at first sight with a young lady to whom he lent his umbrella on a wet day. Her father was a much richer man than his father, and in a different class of life, though not born of more famous ancestors. Being in love, Scott became tidy and polite, dressed well, went to parties, wrote poetry, and made many friends, including dukes and duchesses. For some reason he was not fortunate enough to marry this lady. “ She was more like an angel than a woman,” says a person who knew her well. For years Scott was very unhappy, though he did not say anything about it. He always dreamed of this lady before any misfortune came to him. In his poems and novels you see places in which he has been

thinking of her : she is the heroine of one poem, *Rokeby*, and one novel, *Redgauntlet*. When he was old and weak, he sat at the foot of the tall ancient tower of St. Rules, at St. Andrews, and thought of how he had cut her name in *Runic* letters on the turf there, when he was young. (“Runic” is the kind of alphabet used by the old Danes, who gave the English so much trouble in early times.)

This love affair was the great sorrow of Scott’s life, but he bore it like a man ; he worked at his studies (at last !), and became an “advocate,” as the Scots call a barrister. He made long journeys into the country on the border of Scotland and England, collecting the ballads which the people made for themselves four hundred years ago ; and he went into the Highlands, where the men who fought for Prince Charlie lived, and everywhere he made friends, and gathered old stories. His first book was one of translations from German poems about ghosts, his next a translation of a German play. In 1797 he met a pretty, merry girl of French birth, Miss Charpentier, and married her. He said : “There is no *romance* in her composition ;” she did not care much about the old stories of which he was so fond. But she was “jolly,” and they now lived very happily in Edinburgh, and, in summer, at a cottage in the country. In 1802 Scott published the old songs he had picked up, with some of his own, and with essays on the old times. The book is called *The Border Minstrelsy*, and became famous. Of Scott’s own pieces, “The Eve of St. John” is the best ; the scene where the ghost burns the lady’s hand is Smailholme Tower, beside the house where he lived when he was three years old, and laughed at the lightning.

Scott now began the first, and the best, of his longer poems, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. It was written in a new, lively and irregular metre, invented by the poet Coleridge, in *Christabel*.

Coleridge never finished that poem, and did not publish the part he had written till twelve years later. But Scott heard

a friend repeat part of it, and he never forgot what he had heard. Once he was fishing in the Tweed at night with James Hogg, a shepherd and a poet. They had to wait for some of their fishing things, and Scott said : “ Jamie, repeat that poem of yours that you once read to me.” The shepherd could not remember it, so Scott recited the whole long ballad, which he had only heard once.

In the same way the metre of part of *Christabel* remained in his mind, and in that, with changes, he wrote *The Lay*. It is all about the witches and warriors of old times, and the famous wizard, Michael Scot, who split by magic the hill of Eildon into its three peaks. The heroes were real people of Scott's own family, in the time of Henry VIII., Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary, but they are mixed up with a mischievous fairy boy, The Goblin Page, and with Michael Scot's book of magic, buried in his grave in Melrose Abbey.

For a great many years poetry had been what you may call very dull stuff, very prim and moral, and this poem was a new thing, most exciting to read, and very beautiful. Scott at once was famous, and in money he got £669 9s. Unluckily about this time Scott became, secretly, a partner of two boys with whom he had been at school in the business of printing ; later they not only *printed* books for publishers, but *published* them. It was not allowed to advocates to be partners in any business, but the business, as it was concerned with books, amused Scott. He would publish books about things, old things, which interested him, but for which few other people cared. The result of all this was that Scott was constantly losing money, and getting mixed up in trade affairs, and promises to pay. He had plenty to live on, for he held two well-paid legal positions, and soon began to make thousands of pounds by his poems, and, after 1814, by his novels. But partly he lost it in the business of his school friends and partly he spent it in buying an estate on the Tweed, and building Abbotsford, and purchasing expensive

old books, pictures and curious things, and on asking everybody to stay with him. He enjoyed himself very much, and made himself the best-liked man in all Scotland, for he talked to shepherds and labourers and everybody, "as if they had been his own blood relations," and he found work and money for poor people in hard times, and always had money for everybody in distress. But the end of all this was that, twenty years after he wrote the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, when Scott thought himself very rich, he found himself ruined. There was nobody to pay a huge debt but Scott, and he did of working to do it, writing, writing, all day long, at histories and novels, till his brain broke. But his debts were paid.

All these miseries happened long after the time when he first became famous, but the beginning of them all was just at that time, when Scott was about thirty, and took a part in the business of printing. From that hour anxiety was with him, and ruin was only waiting for its chance.

It was now that Scott, in 1805, began a novel in prose, *Waverley*, but he put it away in a drawer, and forgot all about it. He was writing poems and essays, and drilling with the volunteer cavalry, for Napoleon was overrunning Europe, and had a camp opposite Folkestone, from which he meant to invade our country. There were neither railways nor electric telegraphs then, but piles of wood were set up along the coasts to be lighted for a warning if the French landed. One day Scott was with his wife at a place near Carlisle, when news came that one of these warning fires, or "beacons," had been lighted, and on every height above the sea the flames were blazing. The country and towns of the south of Scotland sent out their armed men, who rode or marched to Dalkeith, the Duke of Buccleugh's house near Edinburgh. They meant to send their wives and children and cattle up into the hills and burn their towns, so that the French might not find food or shelter. My own grandfather, whom Scott knew, was in Edinburgh, away from home, but his mother, who was a widow, sent his horse

and sword to the meeting place, "for," she said to Scott, "I would rather see him dead than a horse's length behind the best." Scott himself mounted as soon as he heard the news, and rode a hundred miles in twenty-four hours, meeting the men of Ettrick Forest. On the road he made a poem; he never was happier than at the chance of a fight. But the beacon had been lighted by accident, and after Nelson won the battle of Trafalgar, Napoleon broke up his camp, and went to win Austerlitz against the Austrians.

I can only mention the books that Scott wrote in the following years, such as the poem of *Marmion*, one of his best, the description of the battle of Flodden, where the English defeated the Scots and killed King James, is the finest battle in British poetry. Scott now lived in summer at Ashiestiel, a beautiful place on the Tweed, where there was no bridge; so that he had the pleasure of riding across the flooded ford at the risk of his life. He was sheriff, or chief magistrate, of Selkirkshire, also known as the Forest of Ettrick, and he rode across the hills, composing *Marmion*, on his way to sit as judge at Selkirk. His next poem was *The Lady of the Lake*, about adventures of King James V. (about 1530) in the Highlands. This, like *Marmion*, was a splendid success, and all the world flocked into the Highlands, which previously had been little known to English people. Now Scott bought his estate, which was to be so ruinous to him. He gave fancy prices for poor lands, because they were the scenes of old battles or fairy tales, and he began to build his house, Abbotsford, which is not large, but was terribly expensive. He entertained people who crowded to see him, and spent his money before he got it. His poem of *Rokeby* was about the wars against Charles I. in England, and was not so much liked as his Scottish poems. Besides Lord Byron now wrote *Childe Harold*, and all the world went wild about the new poet.

But Scott had another string to his bow. When hunting in a drawer for fly-hooks to fish with, he found the beginning

part of a novel in prose, *Waverley*, which he had thrown aside in 1805 and 1810 and forgotten. It was now 1814, the month was June. Some very young men were dining together in Edinburgh, one of them was Lockhart, who later married Scott's daughter, Sophia, and wrote his Life. From their table they saw into a room in a neighbouring house ; what they saw was the hand of a man writing, writing, finishing page after page, and throwing it aside. Candles were brought, and still the hand wrote on and on. One of the young men knew that it was the hand of Walter Scott. He wrote the two last volumes of *Waverley* in three weeks, sent them to the printer and went on a cruise round the coasts of Scotland. He did not publish his name as the author of *Waverley*, and when he returned from his tour in the North he found that an unknown person, the author of *Waverley*, was famous. For some reason he never did admit that he was the author of this and his other novels, till, eleven years later, when the truth was certain to be discovered, in the examining into the affairs of his printing company. People guessed from the very first that he must have written *Waverley*, and about twenty persons knew for certain, but they all kept the secret. The secret amused Scott, for all sorts of absurd guesses were made in his hearing, and though there was perfect proof in a passage of *Rob Roy* that he was the author, nobody noticed it till a few years ago.

At that time not many novels were written, and no good novels, except those of Scott's friend, Miss Edgeworth, about the characters and ways of the Irish. Scott thought he could make as much of the ways and characters of his own people of Scotland ; and he also could tell of the old times that he knew so well. Thus almost all of his novels are "historical," and speak of times long past, times of Prince Charlie (1745-60), of Queen Mary (1568), of Charles II. (1670-80), of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603), of Richard I. (about 1195), of James I. (1604-24), of Louis XI. of France (about 1475), and so on. The author knew the Scots of every rank in life thoroughly

well, and to him the famous people of history were like living friends, and he made them come to life again in his books. Many writers everywhere, in France, Germany, and England, have imitated Scott in writing novels about historical events and persons, but none has ever done it so well, except Alexandre Dumas, in French, the author of *The Three Musketeers*. Nobody at all has come near Scott in drawing Scottish characters, whether barons and ladies, or gardeners and ploughmen. There are hundreds of men and women of his invention, from Claverhouse the cavalier to the Glasgow magistrate, or the lawyer Macwheebie, or James I., or the old Covenanter, Davie Deans, or the thief Ratcliffe, whom we know as well as if we met them every day.

In this power of making fancied personages real, Scott comes nearest to Shakespeare. It is true that his hero and heroine are not usually very interesting. They fall in love, go through dangers, and marry happily. But they are only points about which the story moves ; scores of other characters surround them, and are much more alive than they are. Thus in *Waverley* Scott had the lowest opinion of his hero, Edward Waverley, a brave, handsome, undecided young man, not very clever, who takes the side of Prince Charles for love of one lady, and marries another, an innocent, pretty, harmless little lass, who has fallen in love with him. It is the other people, Fergus MacIvor and his Highlanders ; the brave, loyal, old-fashioned Baron Bradwardine ; the tipsy laird, Balmawhapple ; the silly, noisy Gilfillan ; Prince Charles himself, gallant, beautiful, and doomed to misfortune, who make the story interesting. The only heroines whom we care much about are Diana Vernon in *Rob Roy*, so much of a boy, and so beautiful and loyal a woman ; Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*, and Catherine Seton in *The Abbot*. Scott's old women are much more excellent than his girls ; and he writes just as little as he can about love-making. The exception is Jeanie Deans, a country girl, rather good than pretty, and she is his masterpiece.

His best novels are about Scotland, and of these the best are *Waverley*, *Old Mortality* (about the Covenanters and Claverhouse), *The Heart of Midlothian*, *The Antiquary* (a story of his own times) and *Guy Mannering*. Next come *The Fortunes of Nigel* (a Scot in London at the Court of James I.), and *Quentin Durward* (a Scot in France at the Court of Louis XI). Most boys like *Ivanhoe* best, a novel about Richard Cœur de Lion, Robin Hood and Friar Tuck ; and *The Talisman*, the story of a Scottish knight in the Crusades, is also very popular. But where are we to stop ? We cannot be happy without the fighting blacksmith and the cowardly Highland chief in *The Fair Maid of Perth*, and Queen Elizabeth and Amy Robsart in *Kenilworth*, and Charles II. as a lad, and Oliver Cromwell in *Woodstock*, and Minna and Brenda in *The Pirate* ; nor can we overlook little tales like "The Highland Widow" and "Wandering Willy's Tale" in *Redgauntlet* (which is certainly one of the best in the whole family), and *The Tapestried Chamber*, a terrible little ghost story ; and then there is *The Bride of Lammermoor*, the most tragical of them all. In these Waverley novels and Shakespeare's plays you could be happy, as far as reading goes, on a desert island.

The drawbacks of the novels are that there is occasionally a dull beginning, about history ; that the grammar is not always what you can recommend to a friend, and that characters, especially meant to be comic, are apt to grow tedious. If I might advise a boy or girl, I would say : " Skip what you find dull, or cannot understand, and read what you find interesting." Later, other passages will interest you, and the older you grow the more you will find to admire, and the more you will fall in love with Walter Scott.

It is not to be thought that all the history is correct. Scott took great liberties in spinning his stories, but the point is that the people themselves are all real, behaving and talking just as they did behave and talk. As you read history, you will soon find out what things in the novels did not happen, or

could not happen, but the life of the men and women you learn from Scott.

He only wrote one long poem after the success of *Waverley*, that was *The Lord of the Isles*, about the adventures of Robert Bruce. People liked the novels better, and he wrote, on an average, two a year. He was created a baronet, Sir Walter Scott, and was the best liked and most honoured man in the country. Then came the bankruptcy in 1825-26, and five years of eternal hard work at novels, essays, a history of Napoleon, anything to pay his debts and clear his honour. His brain gave way, he had apoplexy, but he worked on, and, even when he went abroad for his health, in 1832, he must still write—a novel called *The Knights of Malta*. But the busy hand and brain were tired out; the handwriting is different, but the pages are still filled in the old way. The book will never be published. In Italy and at Rome, the scenes of old Roman history did not interest him, he went and stood by the graves of our exiled Princes, James, Charles, and Henry, the descendants of the old Royal Family of Scotland.

Then he grew worse, and was hurried home. He was glad to see his dogs, and the hills, and the dear water of the Tweed, and the faces of his friends. He said to Lockhart, his son-in-law: “My dear, be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here. . . . God bless you all.” These were his latest recorded words, though it is said that he asked to be lifted up to see the Tweed once more. He died on 21st September, 1832, and was buried, with the sorrow of the whole country, in the beautiful ruins of Dryburgh Abbey, where Lockhart now lies at his feet, and the murmur of the Tweed is never still.

There he had always wished to sleep.

Sir Walter Scott wrote many volumes of which nothing has been said here, for example, the delightful *Tales of a Grandfather* about the history of Scotland, a great number of

essays, and notes on other authors, such as Swift and Dryden. He never wrote a word that on his death-bed he would have wished to blot out. He gave more happiness to more readers than kings or statesmen can bestow on the world. Dogs and horses were all fond of him, and a hen and a pig used to run after him for friendship ! He was the most generous of men ; in his misfortunes, having no money to give to a needy person, he actually wrote, without signing his name, some sermons which brought money for the sufferer. He was so far from vain that he thought his children should not read his poetry, though he owned that it was only intended for "young people of spirit." Among his very best verses are the little songs and ballads which were sung by the characters in his novels, such as "Proud Maisie," "The Battle of Harlaw" and "Bonny Dundee." He never wrote anything about the mysterious problems of human life and destiny ; it was not that he did not think about them, but his conclusion was, "My dear, be a good man."

INTRODUCTION

THE events related by Scott in *The Talisman* are supposed to have taken place in Syria in the year 1191, during a short truce in the war known as the Third Crusade.

The Crusades.—The Crusades were military expeditions undertaken by the Christians of Western Europe for the recovery of the Holy Land from the Turks, who, in 1065, had driven out the Arabs and taken possession of the country. The Turks at this time had embraced the religion founded by the Arabian prophet Mohammed or Mahomet, who was born at Mecca in the year 569 A.D. On becoming masters of Syria, the Turks began to treat the numerous Christian pilgrims to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem with great harshness and with many insults. In 1095 a pilgrim monk, Peter the Hermit, returned to Europe and began at once to relate to the Christian nations the indignities which their fellow Christians in Syria suffered at the hands of the Mahometan Turks. His preaching soon roused great indignation, and the First Crusade, under Godfrey of Bouillon, set out in 1096. It resulted in the capture of Jerusalem and the establishment of a Christian Kingdom in the Holy Land.

The Second Crusade set out in 1147 to relieve the Christians of Edessa, a city in Mesopotamia ; but it failed to achieve success.

The Third Crusade (1189-1192) was undertaken in consequence of the downfall of the Christian Kingdom and the recapture of Jerusalem by the Turks, under the leadership of

the great sultan, Saladin. The news of these disasters soon reached Europe, and the crusading spirit was once more aroused. Soldiers of the Cross readily offered themselves in all countries ; large forces were speedily organized and equipped, and royal leaders eagerly took charge. The chief of these leaders were Richard Cœur de Lion, King of England ; Philip II., King of France ; Frederick I., Emperor of Germany ; and* Leopold, Archduke of Austria. Richard of England and Philip of France joined forces, and sailed together from France. After spending some time in Sicily, where Richard married Berengaria, daughter of the King of Navarre, the two monarchs continued their journey, arriving near Acre in Palestine in 1191. Here they joined their warrior knights to the Christian forces besieging this town. In spite of the efforts of Saladin to relieve the defenders of the town, it was soon obliged to surrender. Shortly afterwards, quarrels arose among the Christian princes partly owing to the haughty and overbearing behaviour of Richard, and Philip returned to France, though Scott represents Philip as remaining longer. After the conquest of Acre, the united Christian forces moved south, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Joppa during the summer. To this period, during a short truce, belong the events related in *The Talisman*.

Although the story of *The Talisman* has some basis of truth, and although most of the characters are characters of history, yet the incidents and scenes are largely fictitious and due to the wonderful imagination of the author. These incidents and scenes are, however, so far true, that they bring before us with masterly skill many customs and manners of the period. These are portrayed in the sayings and actions of representatives of the great nationalities of Western Europe and of Western Asia.

Chivalry.—At the time of the Third Crusade the institution called *Knighthood* was flourishing, not only in Western Europe,

but in England. Young men of gentle (*i.e.* noble) birth were made knights at the age of twenty-one, after they had previously served a training, first as *page* or attendant to the ladies of some noble family, and next as *squire* or attendant to a knight. In some cases other men were made knights, without any period of probation, on account of brave deeds. The ceremony of conferring knighthood varied according to circumstances. In times of peace a feast was held on the preceding day, and the candidate presented with sword and spurs, for knights usually fought on horseback. Then followed a night of devotions, and on the following day the essential part of the ceremony was performed. The candidate, with sword fastened to belt and wearing his spurs, knelt before a prince or other superior, who gave him the *accolade* (a slight blow on the neck or shoulder with the flat of a sword), adding such words as "I dub thee knight in the name of God and St. Michael." Knights were bound by oath to be faithful to all engagements, to do battle for the right, to maintain justice, to defend women, and to shield the weak and unprotected. The system of manners and high conduct required of knights is indicated by the word *Chivalry* (French *chevalier*, a knight); while brave, courteous, and honourable deeds, such as were expected from every true knight, are still described as *chivalrous*. Many knights failed to keep their vows and to live up to the high standard expected of them; but it has been said that whatever the vices and defects of knighthood or chivalry may have been, yet this institution produced some of the worthiest actions and noblest ideas of the Middle Ages. When a knight was offended, or received an affront of any kind from another, the insulted knight threw down his *gauntlet*, or glove of mail, and challenged the offender to a fight in single *combat*. The combat was fought in *armour* within barriers called *lists*, and the fight was called a *tournament*. The victor was considered to have proved that he was right and his cause just.

CHIEF CHARACTERS OF "THE TALISMAN."

Richard I., King of England, surnamed Cœur de Lion (the Lion-hearted). He is portrayed in *The Talisman* as brave and generous, but somewhat hot-tempered, violent, and overbearing.

Philip II. (Philip Augustus), King of France. He appears in the story as a prudent, calm, and politic warrior.

Leopold, Archduke of Austria. Austria was at this time only a small State in the middle of Europe.

Conrade of Montserrat or Montferrat, a prince of one of the small States of Italy. He defended Tyre against the forces of Saladin until the arrival of Richard and Philip. Desiring to become King of Jerusalem on its recapture, he employs craft and treachery to gain his ends.

Sir Kenneth, Knight of the Crouching Leopard. His adventures and deeds form the main part of the story. At the close he turns out to be David, Earl of Huntingdon, brother and heir of the King of Scotland.

Lord de Vaux, Thomas of Gilsland, a wise and faithful follower of King Richard.

Giles Amaury, the Grand Master of the Knights Templars.

Archbishop of Tyre, a learned and prudent Christian ecclesiastic of the time.

Saladin, a famous Sultan of the Turks, whose rule extended over Egypt, Arabia, and Syria. He appears in the story under a double disguise : first as a Saracen Emir named Sheerkohf ; and again as an Arab physician, El Hakim. In some points his character resembles that of Richard ; in others the reader will notice a striking contrast.

Theodoric, the Christian hermit of Engaddi, a creation by the author.

Nectabonus, a deformed dwarf, a creation by the author.

Berengaria, sister of the King of Navarre (an ancient kingdom of Spain), and wife of Richard I.

Edith Plantagenet, a kinswoman of Richard, and the chief female character in *The Talisman*. No such person is known in history. She is one of Scott's inventions, as are also the Ladies Calista and Florise, who attend on Berengaria.

The hero of *The Talisman*, or the person whose fortunes form the main theme of the story, and who has the chief share in the events related, is Sir Kenneth, the Knight of the Leopard, although the most striking figure in the story is Richard of the Lion Heart.

Outline of the Story.—The plot of the romance, that is, the complication of circumstances that lead up to the final issue of the train of events, may be now briefly stated.

During a short truce between the Christian armies taking part in the Third Crusade and the Mahomedan forces under Sultan Saladin, a Scottish Crusader, Sir Kenneth, Knight of the Leopard, travelling alone through the scorching desert on the west side of the Dead Sea, to consult the Hermit of Engaddi, encounters a Saracen warrior. The two engage in combat, and after a display of valour and skill on both sides, a peaceful understanding is arrived at. The two warriors then refresh themselves at an oasis, known as the Diamond of the Desert. After a short rest, Sir Kenneth, guided by the Saracen, whose name is given as Sheerkohf, reaches the abode of the hermit. Here he visits a marvellous subterranean chapel in which, at a midnight service, he is surprised to see the lady of his love, Edith Plantagenet. Queen Berengaria, attended by some of her chief ladies, was in fact on a pilgrimage to the convent of the hermit at this time.

On returning to the Christian camp, situated near Joppa, Sir Kenneth finds the king ill of a fever, with his trusty friend, Thomas de Vaux (Lord of Gilsland), in attendance. Shortly after, an Arab physician, sent by Saladin and spoken of as El Hakim, arrives. After some inquiry and discussion, the physician is allowed to give the king a draught, which he

prepares from pure water by the aid of a talisman or charm • possessed of wondrous virtues. While the king sleeps, Conrade of Montserrat and the Grand Master of the Knights Templars, who are jealous of the power and influence of Richard, hold a consultation. Conrade avows to the Grand Master his ambition to become King of Jerusalem, and both agree that the success of the Crusade under Richard would not be favourable to their designs. They determine to stir up strife between Richard and the other Christian leaders, and the Grand Master goes so far as to suggest that an assassin should be let loose to murder Richard. Conrade, however, determines to try other means first to gain his ends. With this object in view, he incites Leopold of Austria to place his banner by the side of the English banner on a mound in the centre of the Crusaders' camp.

Richard presently wakes up, and it is found that the fever has left him. Conrade now enters the king's camp and relates what Leopold had done. Furious at what he regarded as an insult to the English banner, Richard rushes forth, ascends the mound, tears down the Austrian banner, and tramples it under foot. A tumult arises among the warriors who had assembled, but Philip of France persuades Richard to refer the matter to the Council of the Crusaders. The English banner is left in charge of Sir Kenneth, and the Scottish knight undertakes to guard it until daybreak, his only companion being a faithful deerhound, Roswal by name. During the night, Queen Berengaria, for a freak, sends a message to Sir Kenneth by a dwarf, saying that Lady Edith desires to see him at once. As the dwarf shows Lady Edith's ring, the knight is deceived, deserts his post, and goes forth to visit the tent of the ladies, though he leaves his deerhound to guard the banner. In his absence the banner is secretly stolen by Conrade, and the dog severely wounded. Overcome with shame and grief when he returns and finds the banner gone, Sir Kenneth weeps aloud. At this moment the physician approaches and learns what has

happened. He dresses the wounds of the dog, and after telling the knight of a project to bring about peace by the marriage of Saladin and Edith, he urges him to fly to the Saracen camp to escape the fury and vengeance of Richard. But Sir Kenneth resolves to go to Richard's camp to denounce the project, although Lady Edith seemed so far above him in station that he could have no hope of gaining her, and to confess his loss of the standard. The king flies into a rage, forbids the mention of Edith's name, and condemns the knight to death for his traitorous neglect of duty and the loss of the banner. Queen Berengaria, Edith Plantagenet, and the hermit all plead in vain for Sir Kenneth; but the knight's life is spared at the entreaty of El Hakim, the physician, who carries him away from the Christian camp. The physician himself, as the warrior Sheerkohf, keeps Sir Kenneth a few days, and explains to him a mode of returning in disguise and finding out who stole the banner. After a short time Sir Kenneth returns to serve the king disguised as a mute Nubian slave. He also bears Saladin's proposal to Edith, who declines to entertain it. Later he is instrumental in saving the king's life from an assassin's poisoned dagger. The dumb slave also informs the king by writing of a method of finding out the thief who stole the standard. Acting on the slave's advice, the king, who suspects Leopold of Austria, causes the leaders of the Christian host to pass before him as he is seated on horseback, with the Nubian slave at his side, holding the hound in a leash. When Conrade rides past, the dog recognizes him as his enemy; the leash is slipped, and the hound brings the treacherous knight to the ground. His guilt is thus made manifest. He, however, denies the crime, but Richard challenges him to a trial by combat. As Conrade declines to fight Richard, it is arranged that a champion for the king shall be found, and that a combat shall be fought according to knightly custom. Saladin is requested to allow the combat to take place on his territory, and he assigns the Diamond of the Desert for the tournament.

Accompanied by the ladies of the court, Richard and his chief warriors travel to the oasis, and there meet the Sultan Saladin and his retinue. To his surprise, the king finds that Saladin is the physician who had cured him, and to whom he had granted Sir Kenneth. He also learns that he was the desert warrior with whom Sir Kenneth had fought. Saladin provides tents for his guests and treats them with great hospitality. Both monarchs perform various feats of strength and skill, and preparations are made for the combat early on the morrow, Sir Kenneth being appointed champion for the king.

On the next day, shortly after sunrise, the combat between Sir Kenneth and Conrade takes place before the assembled hosts of the two monarchs. Conrade is unhorsed and grievously wounded. He acknowledges his guilt, and is carried off to the tent of the Grand Master of the Templars, where, at Richard's request, the Sultan visits him with the talisman. The victorious knight has his helmet removed by the royal ladies, and is then made to appear in his true position, David of Huntingdon, Prince Royal of Scotland. At noon the Saladin entertains his guests at a banquet, but as the Grand Master was raising a goblet of sherbet to his lips, Saladin struck off his head with a single blow of the sabre. In explanation he told Richard that he did this because the dwarf had just revealed to him that the Templar had slain the wounded Conrade in his tent no doubt with the object of preventing him from revealing their common treasonable plots.

The story ends with the marriage of Sir Kenneth (David of Scotland) to Edith Plantagenet, Saladin sending as a wedding gift the famous talisman with which he had wrought the marvellous cures.

The young reader should now be ready to read the story with pleasure and profit as it is related by Scott himself. In it many brilliant scenes are brought before the eye; many exciting adventures are described; many types of character

are portrayed ; and many vivid pictures of the men and manners of days long passed away are drawn by a master hand. Difficult words, phrases and allusions will be found explained in the notes.

[The parts printed in square brackets are short explanatory paragraphs of portions of the author's narrative that have been omitted in this abridged edition.]

THE TALISMAN

CHAPTER I.

THE burning sun of Syria had not yet attained its highest point in the horizon, when a knight of the Red Cross, who had left his distant northern home and joined the host of the Crusaders in Palestine, was pacing slowly along the sandy deserts which lie in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, 5 or, as it is called, the Lake Asphaltites, where the waves of the Jordan pour themselves into an inland sea, from which there is no discharge of waters.

Crossing himself, as he viewed the dark mass of rolling waters, in colour as in quality unlike those of every other 10 lake, the traveller shuddered as he remembered that beneath these sluggish waves lay the once proud cities of the plain, whose grave was dug by the thunder of the heavens, or the eruption of subterraneous fire, and whose remains were hid, even by that sea which holds no living fish in its 15 bosom, bears no skiff on its surface, and, as if its own dreadful bed were the only fit receptacle for its sullen waters, sends not, like other lakes, a tribute to the ocean. The whole land around, as in the days of Moses, was “brimstone and salt; it is not sown, nor beareth, nor 20 any grass growtheth thereon”; the land as well as the lake might be termed dead, as producing nothing having resemblance to vegetation; and even the very air was entirely devoid of its ordinary winged inhabitants, deterred

probably by the odour of bitumen and sulphur, which the burning sun exhaled from the waters of the lake in steaming clouds.

Upon this scene of desolation the sun shone with almost intolerable splendour, and all living nature seemed to have hidden itself from the rays, excepting the solitary figure which moved through the flitting sand at a foot's pace, and appeared the sole breathing thing on the wide surface of the plain. The dress of the rider and the accoutrements of his horse were peculiarly unfit for the traveller in such a country. A coat of linked mail, with long sleeves, plaited gauntlets, and a steel breastplate, had not been esteemed a sufficient weight of armour; there was also his triangular shield suspended round his neck, and his barred helmet of steel, over which he had a hood and collar of mail, which was drawn around the warrior's shoulders and throat, and filled up the vacancy between the hauberk and the head-piece. His lower limbs were sheathed, like his body, in flexible mail, securing the legs and thighs, while the feet rested in plated shoes, which corresponded with the gauntlets. A long, broad, straight-shaped, double-edged falchion, with a handle formed like a cross, corresponded with a stout poniard on the other side. The knight also bore, secured to his saddle, with one end resting on his stirrup, the long steel-headed lance, his own proper weapon, which, as he rode, projected backwards, and displayed its little pennoncelle, to dally with the faint breeze, or drop in the dead calm. To this cumbersome equipment must be added a surcoat of embroidered cloth, much frayed and worn, which was thus far useful, that it excluded the burning rays of the sun from the armour, which they would otherwise have rendered intolerable to the wearer. The surcoat bore, in several places, the arms of the owner, although much defaced,

These seemed to be a couchant leopard, with the motto, “I sleep—wake me not.” An outline of the same device might be traced on his shield, though many a blow had almost effaced the painting. The flat top of his cumbrous cylindrical helmet was unadorned with any crest. 5

The accoutrements of the horse were scarcely less massive and unwieldy than those of the rider. The animal had a heavy saddle plated with steel, uniting in front with a species of breastplate, and behind with defensive armour made to cover the loins. Then there was a steel axe, or 10 hammer, called a mace-of-arms, and which hung to the saddle-bow; the reins were secured by chainwork, and the front-stall of the bridle was a steel plate, with apertures for the eyes and nostrils, having in the midst a short sharp spike, projecting from the forehead of the horse like the 15 horn of the fabulous unicorn.

But habit had made the endurance of this load of panoply a second nature, both to the knight and his gallant charger.

Nature, which cast his limbs in a mould of uncommon 20 strength, fitted to wear his linked hauberk with as much ease as if the meshes had been formed of cobwebs, had endowed him with a constitution as strong as his limbs, and which bade defiance to almost all changes of climate, as well as to fatigue and privations of every kind. The 25 small train which had followed him from his native country had been gradually diminished, as the means of maintaining them disappeared, and his only remaining squire was at present on a sick-bed, and unable to attend his master, who travelled, as we have seen, singly and 30 alone. This was of little consequence to the Crusader, who was accustomed to consider his good sword as his safest escort, and devout thoughts as his best companion.

Nature had, however, her demands for refreshment and

repose, even on the iron frame and patient disposition of the Knight of the Sleeping Leopard; and at noon, when the Dead Sea lay at some distance on his right, he joyfully hailed the sight of two or three palm-trees, which arose 5 beside the well which was assigned for his midday station. His good horse, too, which had plodded forward with the steady endurance of his master, now lifted his head, expanded his nostrils, and quickened his pace, as if he snuffed afar off the living waters, which marked the place 10 of repose and refreshment. But labour and danger were loomed to intervene ere the horse or horseman reached the desired spot.

As the Knight of the Couchant Leopard continued to fix his eyes attentively on the yet distant cluster of palm-trees, it seemed to him as if some object was moving 15 among them. The distant form separated itself from the trees, which partly hid its motions, and advanced towards the knight with a speed which soon showed a mounted horseman, whom his turban, long spear, and green caftan 20 floating on the wind, on his nearer approach, showed to be a Saracen cavalier. "In the desert," saith an Eastern proverb, "no man meets a friend." The Crusader was totally indifferent whether the infidel, who now approached on his gallant barb, as if borne on the wings of an eagle, 25 came as friend or foe—perhaps, as a vowed champion of the Cross, he might rather have preferred the latter. He disengaged his lance from his saddle, seized it with the right hand, placed it in rest with its point half elevated, gathered up the reins in the left, waked his horse's mettle 30 with the spur, and prepared to encounter the stranger with the calm self-confidence belonging to the victor in many contests.

The Saracen came on at the speedy gallop of an Arab horseman, managing his steed more by his limbs and the

inflection of his body than by any use of the reins, which hung loose in his left hand ; so that he was enabled to wield the light round buckler of the skin of the rhinoceros, ornamented with silver loops, which he wore on his arm, swinging it as if he meant to oppose its slender circle 5 to the formidable thrust of the Western lance. His own long spear was not couched or levelled like that of his antagonist, but grasped by the middle with his right hand, and brandished at arm's length above his head. As the cavalier approached his enemy at full career, he seemed to 10 expect that the Knight of the Leopard should put his horse to the gallop to encounter him. But the Christian knight, well acquainted with the customs of Eastern warriors, did not mean to exhaust his good horse by any unnecessary exertion ; and, on the contrary, made a dead halt, confident 15 that, if the enemy advanced to the actual shock, his own weight, and that of his powerful charger, would give him sufficient advantage, without the additional momentum of rapid motion. Equally sensible and apprehensive of such a probable result, the Saracen cavalier, when he had ap- 20 proached towards the Christian within twice the length of his lance, wheeled his steed to the left with inimitable dexterity, and rode twice round his antagonist, who, turning without quitting his ground, and presenting his front constantly to his enemy, frustrated his attempts to attack him 25 on an unguarded point ; so that the Saracen, wheeling his horse, was fain to retreat to the distance of a hundred yards. A second time, like a hawk attacking a heron, the heathen renewed the charge, and a second time was fain to retreat without coming to a close struggle. A third time he ap- 30 proached in the same manner, when the Christian knight, desirous to terminate this elusory warfare, in which he might at length have been worn out by the activity of his foeman, suddenly seized the mace which hung at his

saddle-bow, and, with a strong hand and unerring aim, hurled it against the head of the Emir, for such and not less his enemy appeared. The Saracen was just aware of the formidable missile in time to interpose his light buckler 5 betwixt the mace and his head; but the violence of the blow forced the buckler down on his turban, and though that defence also contributed to deaden its violence, the Saracen was beaten from his horse. Ere the Christian could avail himself of this mishap, his nimble foeman . 10 sprung from the ground, and calling on his steed, which instantly returned to his side, he leapt into his seat without touching the stirrup, and regained all the advantage of which the Knight of the Leopard hoped to deprive him. But the latter had in the meanwhile recovered his mace, 15 and the Eastern cavalier, who remembered the strength and dexterity with which his antagonist had aimed it, seemed to keep cautiously out of reach of that weapon, of which he had so lately felt the force, while he showed his purpose of waging a distant warfare with missile weapons 20 of his own. Planting his long spear in the sand at a distance from the scene of combat, he strung, with great address, a short bow which he carried at his back, and, putting his horse to the gallop, once more described two or three circles of a wider extent than formerly, in the 25 course of which he discharged six arrows at the Christian with such unerring skill that the goodness of his harness alone saved him from being wounded in as many places. The seventh shaft apparently found a less perfect part of the armour, and the Christian dropped heavily from his 30 horse. But what was the surprise of the Saracen, when dismounting to examine the condition of his prostrate, enemy, he found himself suddenly within the grasp of the European, who had had recourse to this artifice to bring his enemy within his reach! Even in this deadly

grapple the Saracen was saved by his agility and presence of mind. He unloosed the sword-belt, in which the Knight of the Leopard had fixed his hold, and, thus eluding his fatal grasp, mounted his horse, which seemed to watch his motions with the intelligence of a human being, and again rode off. But in the last encounter the Saracen had lost his sword and his quiver of arrows, both of which were attached to the girdle which he was obliged to abandon. He had also lost his turban in the struggle. These disadvantages seemed to incline the Moslem to a truce: he approached the Christian with his right hand extended, but no longer in a menacing attitude.

“There is truce betwixt our nations,” he said, in the *lingua franca* commonly used for the purpose of communication with the Crusaders; “wherefore should there be war betwixt thee and me? Let there be peace betwixt us.”

“I am well contented,” answered he of the Couignant Leopard; “but what security dost thou offer that thou wilt observe the truce?”

“The word of a follower of the Prophet was never broken,” answered the Emir. “It is thou, brave Nazarene, from whom I should demand security, did I not know that treason seldom dwells with courage.”

The Crusader felt that the confidence of the Moslem made him ashamed of his own doubts.

“By the cross of my sword,” he said, laying his hand on the weapon as he spoke, “I will be true companion to thee, Saracen, while our fortune wills that we remain in company together.”

“By Mohammed, Prophet of God, and by Allah, God of the Prophet,” replied his late foeman, “there is not treachery in my heart towards thee. And now wend we to yonder fountain, for the hour of rest is at hand, and

the stream had hardly touched my lip when I was called to battle by thy approach."

The Knight of the Couchant Leopard yielded a ready and courteous assent ; and the late foes, without an angry 5 look, or gesture of doubt, rode side by side to the little cluster of palm-trees.

CHAPTER II.

IT was under the influence of the milder feelings, which soften the horrors of warfare, that the Christian and Saracen, who had so lately done their best for each other's 10 mutual destruction, rode at a slow pace towards the fountain of palm-trees, to which the Knight of the Couchant Leopard had been tending, when interrupted in mid-passage by his fleet and dangerous adversary. The loose soil on which he trod so much augmented the dis- 15 tress of the Christian's horse, heavily loaded by his own armour and the weight of his rider, that the latter jumped from his saddle, and led his charger along the deep dust of the loamy soil.

" You are right," said the Saracen ; and it was the first 20 word that either had spoken since their truce was concluded, " your strong horse deserves your care ; but what do you in the desert with an animal which sinks over the fetlock at every step, as if he would plant each foot deep as the root of a date-tree ? "

25 " Thou speakest rightly, Saracen," said the Christian knight, not delighted at the tone with which the infidel criticised his favourite horse—" rightly, according to thy knowledge and observation. But my good horse hath ere

now borne me, in mine own land, over as wide a lake as thou seest yonder spread out behind us, yet not wet one hair above his hoof."

The Saracen looked at him with as much surprise as his manners permitted him to testify.

"It is justly spoken," he said, instantly composing himself to his usual serene gravity: "list to a Frank, and hear a fable."

"Thou art not courteous, misbeliever," replied the Crusader, "to doubt the word of a dubbed knight; and 10 were it not that thou speakest in ignorance, and not in malice, our truce had its ending ere it is well begun. Thinkest thou I tell thee an untruth when I say that I, one of five hundred horsemen, armed in complete mail, have ridden—ay, and ridden for miles, upon water as solid 15 as the crystal and ten times less brittle!"

"What wouldest thou tell me?" answered the Moslem. "Yonder inland sea thou dost point at is peculiar in this, that by the especial curse of God, it suffereth nothing to sink in its waves, but wafts them away and casts them on 20 its margin; but neither the Dead Sea nor any of the seven oceans which environ the earth will endure on their surface the pressure of a horse's foot, more than the Red Sea endured to sustain the advance of Pharaoh and his host."

"You speak truth after your knowledge, Saracen," said the Christian knight; "and yet, trust me, I fable not, according to mine. Heat, in this climate, converts the soil into something almost as unstable as water; and in my land cold often converts the water itself into a substance 30 as hard as rock. Let us speak of this no longer; for the thoughts of the calm, clear, blue fulgence of a winter's lake, glimmering to stars and moonbeam, aggrave the horrors of this fiery desert, where, methinks, the

very air which we breathe is like the vapour of a fiery furnace seven times heated."

The Saracen looked on him with some attention, as if to discover in what sense he was to understand words which to him must have appeared either to contain something of mystery or of imposition. At length he seemed determined in what manner to receive the language of his new companion.

" You are," he said, " of a nation that loves to laugh, and you make sport with yourselves, and with others, by telling what is impossible, and reporting what never chanced."

" In talking to thee of what thou canst not comprehend," said the knight, " I have, even in speaking most simple truth, fully incurred the character of a braggart in thine eyes: so, I pray you, let my words pass."

They had now arrived at the knot of palm-trees, and the fountain which welled out from beneath their shade in sparkling confusion.

In this delightful spot the two warriors halted, and each, after his own fashion, proceeded to relieve his horse from saddle, bit and rein, and permitted the animals to drink at the basin ere they refreshed themselves from the fountain-head, which arose under the vault. They then suffered the steeds to go loose, confident that their interest, as well as their domesticated habits, would prevent their straying from the pure water and fresh grass.

Christian and Saracen next sat down together on the turf, and produced each the small allowance of store which they carried for their own refreshment.

The champions formed a striking contrast to each other in person and features, and might have formed no inaccurate representatives of their different nations. The Frank seemed a powerful man, built after the ancient Gothic cast of form, with light brown hair, which, on the

removal of his helmet, was seen to curl thick and profusely over his head. His features had acquired, from the hot climate, a hue much darker than those parts of his neck which were less frequently exposed to view, or than was warranted by his full and well-opened blue eye, the colour 5 of his hair, and of the moustachios which thickly shaded his upper lip, while his chin was carefully divested of beard, after the Norman fashion. His nose was Grecian and well formed; his mouth rather large in proportion, but filled with well-set, strong, and beautifully white teeth; 10 his head small, and set upon the neck with much grace. His age could not exceed thirty, but, if the effects of toil and climate were allowed for, might be three or four years under that period. His form was tall, powerful, and athletic, like that of a man whose strength might, in later 15 life, become unwieldy, but which was hitherto united with lightness and activity. His hands, when he withdrew the mailed gloves, were long, fair, and well-proportioned; the wrist-bones peculiarly large and strong; and the arms themselves remarkably well-shaped and brawny. 20

The Saracen Emir formed a marked and striking contrast with the Western Crusader. His stature was indeed above the middle size, but he was at least three inches shorter than the European, whose size approached the gigantic. His slender limbs and long spare hands and 25 arms, though well-proportioned to his person, and suited to the style of his countenance, did not at first aspect promise the display of vigour and elasticity which the Emir had lately exhibited. But, on looking more closely, his limbs, where exposed to view, seemed divested of all that 30 was fleshy or cumbersome; so that, nothing being left but bone, brawn, and sinew, it was a frame fitted for exertion and fatigue, far beyond that of a bulky champion, whose strength and size are counterbalanced by weight, and who

is exhausted by his own exertions. His features were small, well-formed, and delicate, though deeply embrowned by the Eastern sun, and terminated by a flowing and curled black beard, which seemed trimmed with peculiar care. 5 The nose was straight and regular, the eyes keen, deep-set, black, and glowing, and his teeth equalled in beauty the ivory of his deserts. The person and proportions of the Saracen, in short, stretched on the turf near to his powerful antagonist, might have been compared to his sheeny and 10 crescent-formed sabre, with its narrow and light, but bright and keen, Damascus blade, contrasted with the long and ponderous Gothic war-sword, which was flung unbuckled on the same sod. The Emir was in the very flower of his age, and might perhaps have been termed eminently 15 beautiful, but for the narrowness of his forehead, and something of too much thinness and sharpness of feature, or at least what might have seemed such in a European estimate of beauty.

The provision which each had made for his refreshment 20 was simple, but the meal of the Saracen was abstemious. A handful of dates and a morsel of coarse barley-bread sufficed to relieve the hunger of the latter, whose education had habituated him to the fare of the desert, although, since their Syrian conquests, the Arabian simplicity of life 25 frequently gave place to the most unbounded profusion of luxury. A few draughts from the lovely fountain by which they reposed completed his meal. That of the Christian, though coarse, was more genial. Dried hog's flesh, the abomination of the Moslemah, was the chief part 30 of his repast; and his drink, derived from a leatherne bottle, contained something better than pure element.

"That diamond signet," said the knight, "which thou wearest on thy finger, thou holdest it, doubtless, as of inestimable value."

"Balsora and Bagdad cannot show the like," replied the Saracen; "but what avails it to our purpose?"

"Much," replied the Frank, "as thou shalt thyself confess. Take my war-axe, and dash the stone into twenty shivers; would each fragment be as valuable as 5 the original gem, or would they, all collected, bear the tenth part of its estimation?"

"That is a child's question," answered the Saracen; "the fragments of such a stone would not equal the entire jewel in the degree of hundreds to one." 10

"Saracen," replied the Christian warrior, "the love which a true knight binds on one only, fair and faithful, is the gem entire; the affection thou flingest among thy enslaved wives and half-wedded slaves is worthless, comparatively, as the sparkling shivers of the broken 15 diamond. Brave Saracen," continued the knight, "if I were not on a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, it should be my pride to conduct you, on assurance of safety, to the camp of Richard of England, than whom none knows better how to do honour to a noble foe; 20 and though I be poor and unattended, yet have I interest to secure for thee, or any such as thou seemest, not safety only, but respect and esteem. There shouldst thou see several of the fairest beauties of France and Britain form a small circle, the brilliancy of which 25 exceeds ten thousand-fold the lustre of mines of diamonds such as thine."

"Now, by the corner-stone of the Caaba," said the Saracen, "I will accept thy invitation as freely as it is given, if thou wilt postpone thy present intent; and, credit 30 me, brave Nazarene, it were better for thyself to turn back thy horse's head towards the camp of thy people, for to travel towards Jerusalem without a passport is but a wilful casting away of thy life."

“I have a pass,” answered the knight, producing a parchment, “under Saladin’s hand and signet.”

The Saracen bent his head to the dust as he recognized the seal and handwriting of the renowned soldan of Egypt 5 and Syria; and, having kissed the paper with profound respect, he pressed it to his forehead, then returned it to the Christian, saying—

“Rash Frank, thou hast sinned against thine own blood and mine, for not showing this to me when we 10 met.”

“You came with levelled spear,” said the knight; “had a troop of Saracens so assailed me, it might have stood with my honour to have shown the soldan’s pass, but never to one man.”

15 “And yet one man,” said the Saracen, haughtily, “was enough to interrupt your journey.”

“True, brave Moslem,” replied the Christian; “but there are few such as thou art. Such falcons fly not in flocks, or if they do, they pounce not in numbers upon 20 one.”

“Thou dost us but justice,” said the Saracen, evidently gratified by the compliment, as he had been touched by the implied scorn of the European’s previous boast; “from us thou shouldst have had no wrong; but well was it for 25 me that I failed to slay thee, with the safeguard of the king of kings upon thy person.”

“I am glad to hear that its influence shall be availing to me,” said the knight; “for I have heard that the road is infested with robber-tribes, who regard nothing in comparison of an opportunity of plunder.”

“The truth has been told to thee, brave Christian,” said the Saracen; “but I swear to thee, by the turban of the Prophet, that shouldst thou miscarry in any haunt of such villains, I will myself undertake thy revenge with

five thousand horse ; I will slay every male of them, and send their women into such distant captivity that the name of their tribe shall never again be heard within five hundred miles of Damascus. I will sow with salt the foundations of their village, and there shall never live 5 thing dwell there, even from that time forward."

"I had rather the trouble which you design for yourself were in revenge of some other more important person than of me, noble Emir," replied the knight ; "but my vow is recorded in heaven, for good or for evil, and I 10 must be indebted to you for pointing me out the way to my resting-place for this evening."

"That," said the Saracen, "must be under the black covering of my father's tent."

"This night," answered the Christian, "I must pass in 15 prayer and penitence with a holy man, Theodorick of Engaddi, who dwells amongst these wilds, and spends his life in the service of God."

"I will at least see you safe thither," said the Saracen.

"That would be pleasant convoy for me," said the 20 Christian.

CHAPTER III.

ERE they remounted to resume their journey, the Christian knight again moistened his lips, and dipped his hands in the living fountain, and said to his pagan associate of the journey—25

"I would I knew the name of this delicious fountain, that I might hold it in my grateful remembrance ; for

never did water slake more deliciously a more oppressive thirst than I have this day experienced."

"It is called in the Arabic language," answered the Saracen, "by a name which signifies the Diamond of the 5 Desert."

"And well is it so named," replied the Christian. "My native valley hath a thousand springs, but not to one of them shall I attach hereafter such precious recollection as to this solitary fount, which bestows its liquid 10 treasures where they are not only delightful, but nearly indispensable."

"You have asked the name," said the Saracen, "of a mute fountain, which hath the semblance, but not the reality, of a living thing. Let me be pardoned to ask the 15 name of the companion with whom I have this day encountered, both in danger and in repose, and which I cannot fancy unknown, even here among the deserts of Palestine."

"It is not yet worth publishing," said the Christian. 20 "Know, however, that among the soldiers of the Cross I am called Kenneth—Kenneth of the Couching Leopard; at home I have other titles; but they would sound harsh in an Eastern ear. Brave Saracen, let me ask which of the tribes of Arabia claims your descent, and by what 25 name you are known?"

"Sir Kenneth," said the Moslem, "I joy that your name is such as my lips can easily utter. For me, I am no Arab, yet derive my descent from a line neither less wild nor less warlike. Know, Sir Knight of the Leopard, 30 that I am Sheerkohf, the Lion of the Mountain, and that Kurdistan, from which I derive my descent, holds no family more noble than that of Seljook."

"I have heard," answered the Christian, "that your great soldan claims his blood from the same source?"

“Is bravery so much esteemed,” said the Saracen, “among the Christian princes that thou, thus void of means and of men, canst offer, as thou didst of late, to be my protector and security in the camp of thy brethren ?”

5

“Know, Saracen,” said the Christian, “since such is thy style, that the name of a knight, and the blood of a gentleman, entitle him to place himself on the same rank with sovereigns even of the first degree, in so far as regards all but regal authority and dominion. Were Richard of 10 England himself to wound the honour of a knight as poor as I am, he could not, by the law of chivalry, deny him the combat.”

“We hear much of that island sovereign,” said the Saracen; “art thou one of his subjects ?”

15

“One of his followers I am, for this expedition,” answered the knight, “and honoured in the service; but not born his subject, although a native of the island in which he reigns.”

Meanwhile, as they advanced, the scene began to 20 change around them. Dark caverns and chasms amongst the rocks, those grottoes so often alluded to in Scripture, yawned fearfully on either side as they proceeded, and the Scottish knight was informed by the Emir that these were often the refuge of beasts of prey, or of men still 25 more ferocious, who, driven to desperation by the constant war, and the oppression exercised by the soldiery, as well of the Cross as of the Crescent, had become robbers, and spared neither rank nor religion, neither sex nor age, in their depredations.

30

The light was now verging low, yet served the knight still to discern that they two were no longer alone in the forest, but were closely watched by a figure of great height and very thin, which skipped over rocks and

bushes with so much agility as, added to the wild and hirsute appearance of the individual, reminded him of the fauns and sylvans whose images he had seen in the ancient temples of Rome. The apparition, on which his 5 eyes had been fixed for some time, had at first appeared to dog their path by concealing itself behind rocks and shrubs, using those advantages of the ground with great address, and surmounting its irregularities with surprising agility. At length, just as the Saracen paused in his 10 song, the figure, which was that of a tall man clothed in goat-skins, sprung into the midst of the path, and seized a rein of the Saracen's bridle in either hand, confronting thus and bearing back the noble horse, which, unable to endure the manner in which this sudden assailant pressed 15 the long-armed bit, and the severe curb, which, according to the Eastern fashion, was a solid ring of iron, reared upright, and finally fell backwards on his master, who, however, avoided the peril of the fall by lightly throwing himself to one side.

20 The assailant then shifted his grasp from the bridle of the horse to the throat of the rider, flung himself above the struggling Saracen, and, despite of his youth and activity, kept him undermost, wreathing his long arms above those of his prisoner, who called out angrily, and 25 yet half laughing at the same time—

“Hamako—fool—unloose me; this passes thy privilege—unloose me, or I will use my dagger.”

“Thy dagger, infidel dog!” said the figure in the goat-skins. “Hold it in thy gripe if thou canst!” and in an 30 instant he wrenched the Saracen's weapon out of its owner's hand, and brandished it over his head.

“Help, Nazarene!” cried Sheerkohf, now seriously alarmed. “Help, or the Hamako will slay me.”

The Christian knight had hitherto looked on as one

stupefied, so strangely had this rencontre contradicted, in its progress and event, all that he had previously conjectured. He felt, however, at length, that it touched his honour to interfere in behalf of his discomfited companion, and therefore addressed himself to the victorious figure in 5 the goat-skins.

“ Whosoe’er thou art,” he said, “ and whether of good or of evil, know that I am sworn for the time to be true companion to the Saracen whom thou holdest under thee; therefore, I pray thee to let him arise, else I will do battle 10 with thee in his behalf.”

“ And a proper quarrel it were,” answered the Hamako, “ for a Crusader to do battle in—for the sake of an unbaptized dog to combat one of his own holy faith! Art thou come forth to the wilderness to fight for the Crescent 15 against the Cross? A goodly soldier of God art thou, to listen to those who sing the praises of Satan! ”

Yet, while he spoke thus, he arose himself, and, suffering the Saracen to arise also, returned him his cangiar, or poniard. 20

“ Thou seest to what a point of peril thy presumption hath brought thee,” continued he of the goat-skins, now addressing Sheerkohf, “ and by what weak means thy practised skill and boasted agility can be foiled, when such is Heaven’s pleasure.” 25

“ Hamako,” said the Saracen, without any appearance of resenting the violent language, and yet more violent assault, to which he had been subjected, “ I pray thee, good Hamako, to beware how thou dost again urge thy privilege over-far; for though, as a good Moslem, I respect 30 those whom Heaven hath deprived of ordinary reason, in order to endow them with the spirit of prophecy, yet I like not other men’s hands on the bridle of my horse, neither upon my own person. Thou art but a cold and

considerate friend," said the Saracen, turning to the knight; "and, had the Hamako been one grain more frantic, thy companion had been slain by thy side, to thy eternal dishonour, without thy stirring a finger in 5 his aid, although thou satest by, mounted, and in arms."

"By my word, Saracen," said the Christian, "if thou wilt have it in plain terms, I thought that strange figure was the devil; and being of thy lineage, I knew not what family secret you might be communicating to 10 each other, as you lay lovingly rolling together on the sand."

"Thy gib'e is no answer, brother Kenneth," said the Saracen; "for know, that whatever there may be of foul or of fiendish about the Hamako belongs more to your 15 lineage than to mine; this Hamako being, in truth, the anchorite whom thou art come hither to visit."

"This!" said Sir Kenneth, looking at the athletic yet wasted figure before him—"this!—thou mockest, Saracen; this cannot be the venerable Theodorick!"

20 "Ask himself, if thou wilt not believe me," answered Sheerkohf; and ere the words had left his mouth, the hermit gave evidence in his own behalf.

"I am Theodorick of Engaddi," he said; "I am the walker of the desert—I am friend of the Cross, and flail 25 of all infidels, heretics, and devil-worshippers. Avoid ye, avoid ye! Down with Mahound, Termagaunt, and all their adherents!" So saying, he pulled from under his shaggy garment a sort of flail, or jointed club, bound with iron, which he brandished round his head with singular 30 dexterity.

"This is a madman," said Sir Kenneth.

The Saracen seemed to understand him better. "You see," he said, "that he expects us to follow him to his cell, which, indeed, is our only place of refuge for the

night. We must keep him in sight, however, for he is as fleet as a dromedary."

In fact, the task was a difficult one, for, though the reverend guide stopped from time to time, and waved his hand, as if to encourage them to come on, yet he led the 5 knights through chasms and along footpaths, where even the light-armed Saracen, with his well-trained barb, was in considerable risk, and where the iron-sheathed European, and his over-burdened horse, found themselves in such imminent peril as the rider would gladly have exchanged 10 for the dangers of a general action. Glad he was when, at length, after this wild race, he beheld the holy man who had led it standing in front of a cavern, with a large torch in his hand, composed of a piece of wood dipped in bitumen.

15

Undeterred by the stifling vapour, the knight threw himself from his horse and entered the cavern, which afforded small appearance of accommodation. The cell was divided into two parts, in the outward of which were an altar of stone and a crucifix made of reeds; this served 20 the anchorite for his chapel.

There were implements of labour in one corner of the apartment; in the other was a niche for a rude statue of the Virgin. A table and two chairs showed that they must be the handiwork of the anchorite, being different 25 in their form from Oriental accommodations. The former was covered, not only with reeds and pulse, but also with dried flesh, which Theodorick assiduously placed in such arrangement as should invite the appetite of his guests. This appearance of courtesy, though mute and expressed 30 by gesture only, seemed to Sir Kenneth something entirely irreconcilable with his former wild and violent demeanour. The movements of the hermit were now become composed.

Even the Saracen seemed to regard the anchorite with

some veneration, and he whispered in a low tone to Sir Kenneth—

“The Hamako is now in his better mind, but he will not speak until we have eaten—such is his vow.”

5 When their meal was ended, the hermit, who had not himself eaten a morsel, removed the fragments from the table, and, placing before the Saracen a pitcher of sherbet, assigned to the Scot a flask of wine.

“Drink,” he said, “my children”—they were the first 10 words he had spoken—“the gifts of God are to be enjoyed when the Giver is remembered.”

Having said this, he retired to the outward cell, probably for performance of his devotions, and left his guests together in the inner apartment; when Sir Kenneth 15 endeavoured, by various questions, to draw from Sheerkohf what that Emir knew concerning his host. From the Emir he could not extract much information, but the general tenor was as follows:—That, as he had heard, the hermit had been once a brave and valiant soldier, wise in 20 council and fortunate in battle; that he had appeared at Jerusalem in the character, not of a pilgrim, but in that of one who had devoted himself to dwell for the remainder of his life in the Holy Land. Shortly afterwards, he fixed his residence amid the scenes of desolation 25 where they now found him, respected by the Turks and Arabs on account of the symptoms of insanity which he displayed, and which they ascribed to inspiration. It was from them he had the name of Hamako, which expresses such a character in the Turkish language. Sheerkohf 30 himself seemed at a loss how to rank their host. He had been, he said, a wise man, and could often for many hours together speak lessons of virtue or wisdom, without the slightest appearance of inaccuracy. At other times he was wild and violent, but never before had he seen him

so mischievously disposed as he had that day appeared to be. His rage was chiefly provoked by any affront to his religion. His fame had spread so far that Saladin had issued particular orders that he should be spared and protected. 5

This was the substance of the Emir Sheerkohf's information, and it left Sir Kenneth in doubt whether the character of insanity arose from the occasional excessive fervour of the hermit's zeal, or whether it was not altogether fictitious, and assumed for the sake of the ¹⁰ immunities which it afforded. These considerations authorized caution, if not suspicion. He determined to observe his host closely, and not to be over hasty in communicating with him on the important charge intrusted to him. 15

"Beware, Saracen," he said; "methinks our host's imagination wanders as well on the subject of names as upon other matters. Thy name is Sheerkohf, and he called thee but now by another."

"My name, when in the tent of my father," replied ²⁰ the Kurdman, "was Ilderim, and by this I am still distinguished by many. In the field, and to soldiers, I am known as the Lion of the Mountain, being the name my good sword hath won for me. But hush, the Hamako comes; it is to warn us to rest. I know his custom: ²⁵ none must watch him at his vigils."

The anchorite accordingly entered, and, folding his arms on his bosom as he stood before them, said, with a solemn voice,

"Blessed be His name, who hath appointed the quiet ³⁰ night to follow the busy day, and the calm sleep to refresh the wearied limbs, and to compose the troubled spirit!"

Both warriors replied "Amen!" and, arising from

the table, prepared to betake themselves to the couches which their host indicated by waving his hand, as, making a reverence to each, he again withdrew from the apartment.

CHAPTER IV.

5 KENNETH the Scot was uncertain how long his senses had been lost in profound repose, when he was roused to recollection by a sense of oppression on his chest. He was about to demand who was there, when, opening his eyes, he beheld the figure of the anchorite, wild 10 and savage-looking as we have described him, standing by his bedside, and pressing his right hand upon his breast, while he held a small silver lamp in the other.

“Be silent,” said the hermit, as the prostrate knight looked up in surprise; “I have that to say to you which 15 yonder infidel must not hear. Arise,” he continued, “put on thy mantle. Speak not, but tread lightly, and follow me.”

Sir Kenneth arose, and took his sword.

“It needs not,” answered the anchorite, in a whisper; 20 “we are going where spiritual arms avail much, and fleshly weapons are but as the reed and the decayed gourd.”

The knight deposited his sword by the bedside as before, and, armed only with his dagger, from which, in 25 this perilous country, he never parted, prepared to attend his mysterious host.

The hermit then moved slowly forwards, and was followed by the knight, still under some uncertainty whether the dark form which glided on before to show

him the path, was not, in fact, the creation of a disturbed dream.

“Thou art now about to look upon the richest treasure that the earth possesses,” he at length said. “Woe is me, that my eyes are unworthy to be lifted towards it!” 5

He paused again for a moment, and, turning to the Scottish knight, said, in a firmer tone of voice—

“You bring me a greeting from Richard of England?”

“I come from the Council of Christian Princes,” said the knight; “but the King of England being indisposed, 10 I am not honoured with his Majesty’s commands.”

“Your token?” demanded the recluse.

Sir Kenneth hesitated. Former suspicions, and the marks of insanity which the hermit had formerly exhibited, rushed suddenly on his thoughts; but how 15 suspect a man whose manners were so saintly?

“My password,” he said at length, “is this—Kings begged of a beggar.”

“It is right,” said the hermit, while he paused; “I know you well; but the sentinel upon his post—and 20 mine is an important one—challenges friend as well as foe.”

So saying, and making the knight a sign to follow him, the hermit went towards an altar, and, passing behind it, pressed a spring, which, opening without noise, showed a 25 small iron door wrought on the side of the cavern, so as to be almost imperceptible, unless upon the most severe scrutiny.

“Take the veil which I hold,” said the hermit, in a melancholy tone, “and blind mine eyes; for I may not 30 look on the treasure which thou art presently to behold, without sin and presumption.”

Without reply, the knight hastily muffled the recluse’s head in the veil, and the latter began to ascend the

staircase as one too much accustomed to the way to require the use of a light. At length they rested in a small vault of irregular form.

“Put off thy shoes,” he said to his attendant; “the ground on which thou standest is holy.”

The knight laid aside his shoes as he was commanded, and the hermit stood in the meanwhile as if communing with his soul in secret prayer, and, when he again moved, commanded the knight to knock at the wicket three times.

10 He did so. The door opened spontaneously, at least Sir Kenneth beheld no one, and his senses were at once assailed by a stream of the purest light, and by a strong and almost oppressive sense of the richest perfumes.

When he entered the apartment in which this brilliant lustre was displayed, he perceived that the light proceeded from a combination of silver lamps, fed with purest oil, and sending forth the richest odours, hanging by silver chains from the roof of a small Gothic chapel, hewn, like most part of the hermit’s singular mansion, out of the sound and solid rock.

At the upper and eastern end of the chapel stood the altar, behind which a very rich curtain of Persian silk, embroidered deeply with gold, covered a recess, containing, unquestionably, some image or relic of no ordinary sanctity, in honour of whom this singular place of worship had been erected. Under the persuasion that this must be the case, the knight advanced to the shrine, and, kneeling down before it, repeated his devotions, with fervency, during which his attention was disturbed by the curtain being suddenly raised, or rather pulled aside, how or by whom he saw not; but in the niche which was thus disclosed he beheld a cabinet of silver and ebony, with a double folding-door, the whole formed into the miniature resemblance of a Gothic church.

As he gazed with anxious curiosity on the shrine, the two folding-doors also flew open, discovering a large piece of wood, on which were blazoned the words, *VERA CRUX*, at the same time a choir of female voices sung *Gloria Patri*. The instant the strain had ceased the shrine was closed 5 and the curtain again drawn, and the knight who knelt at the altar might now continue his devotions undisturbed, in honour of the holy relic which had just been disclosed to his view. He did this under the profound impression of one who had witnessed an awful evidence of the truth 10 of his religion, and it was some time ere, concluding his orisons, he arose and ventured to look around him for the hermit. He beheld him, his head still muffled in the veil, crouching upon the threshold of the chapel.

He approached him as if to speak, but the recluse 15 anticipated his purpose, murmuring in stifled tones, from beneath the fold in which his head was muffled, and which sounded like a voice proceeding from the cerements of a corpse, "Abide, abide, happy thou that mayest; the vision is not yet ended." So saying, he reared himself 20 from the ground, drew back from the threshold on which he had hitherto lain prostrate, and closed the door of the chapel. Sir Kenneth was now alone in the lighted chapel, which contained the relic to which he had lately rendered his homage, without other arms than his dagger, 25 or other companion than his pious thoughts and dauntless courage.

He did not wait long ere the silken curtain was again withdrawn, and the relic again presented to his view. As he sank reverentially on his knee, he heard the sound of 30 the lauds, or earliest office of the Catholic Church, sung by female voices, which united together in the performance as they had done in the former service. The knight was soon aware that the voices were no longer stationary

in the distance, but approached the chapel and became louder, when a door, imperceptible when closed, like that by which he had himself entered, opened on the other side of the vault, and gave the tones of the choir more room to swell along the ribbed arches of the roof.

The knight fixed his eyes on the opening with breathless anxiety, and, continuing to kneel in the attitude of devotion which the place and scene required, expected the consequence of these preparations. A procession appeared to about to issue from the door. First, four beautiful boys, whose arms, neck, and legs were bare, showing the bronze complexion of the East, and contrasting with the snow-white tunics which they wore, entered the chapel by two and two. The first pair bore censers, which they swung from side to side, adding double fragrance to the odours with which the chapel already was impregnated. The second pair scattered flowers.

After these followed, in due and majestic order, the females who composed the choir; six, who, from their black scapularies and black veils over their white garments, appeared to be professed nuns of the order of Mount Carmel; and as many whose veils, being white, argued them to be novices, or occasional inhabitants in the cloister, who were not as yet bound to it by vows. The former held in their hands large rosaries, while the younger and lighter figures who followed carried each a chaplet of red and white roses. They moved in procession around the chapel, without appearing to take the slightest notice of Kenneth, although passing so near him that their robes almost touched him.

As a second time, in surrounding the chapel, they passed the spot on which he kneeled, one of the white-stoled maidens, as she glided by him, detached from the chaplet which she carried a rosebud, which dropped from

her fingers, perhaps unconsciously, on the foot of Sir Kenneth.

Still, while the procession, for the third time, surrounded the chapel, the thoughts and the eyes of Kenneth followed exclusively the one among the novices who had 5 dropped the rosebud. Short as the space was during which the procession again completed a third perambulation of the chapel, it seemed an eternity to Kenneth. At length the form, which he had watched with such devoted attention, drew nigh; there was no difference betwixt that 10 shrouded figure and the others, with whom it moved in concert and in unison, until, just as she passed for the third time the kneeling Crusader, a part of a little and well-proportioned hand, so beautifully formed as to give the highest idea of the perfect proportions of the form to 15 which it belonged, stole through the folds of the gauze, like a moonbeam through the fleecy cloud of a summer night, and again a rosebud lay at the feet of the Knight of the Leopard.

This second intimation could not be accidental; it 20 could not be fortuitous, the resemblance of that half-seen, but beautiful female hand with one which his lips had once touched, and, while they touched it, had internally sworn allegiance to the lovely owner. Had further proof been wanting, there was the glimmer of that matchless 25 ruby ring on that snow-white finger, whose invaluable worth Kenneth would yet have prized less than the slightest sign which that finger could have made—and, veiled, too, as she was, he might see, by chance or by favour, a stray curl of the dark tresses, each hair of which 30 was dearer to him a hundred times than a chain of massive gold. It was the lady of his love! While these thoughts passed through the mind of Kenneth, the same passage by which the procession had entered the chapel received them

on their return. The young sacristans, the sable nuns vanished successively through the open door. At length she from whom he had received this double intimation passed also, yet, in passing, turned her head, slightly indeed, but perceptibly, towards the place where he remained fixed as an image. He marked the last wave of her veil—it was gone. And Sir Kenneth remained solitary, and in total darkness.

The most profound silence, the deepest darkness, continued to brood for more than an hour over the chapel in which we left the Knight of the Leopard still kneeling, alternately expressing thanks to Heaven and gratitude to his lady for the boon which had been vouchsafed to him.

At the lapse of the space of time which we have noticed, a shrill whistle, like that with which a falconer calls his hawk, was heard to ring sharply through the vaulted chapel. It was a sound ill suited to the place, and reminded Sir Kenneth how necessary it was he should be upon his guard. He started from his knee, and laid his hand upon his poniard. A creaking sound, as of a screw or pulleys, succeeded, and a light streaming upwards, as from an opening in the floor, showed that a trap-door had been raised or depressed. In less than a minute a long skinny arm, partly naked, partly clothed in a sleeve of red samite, arose out of the aperture, holding a lamp as high as it could stretch upwards, and the figure to which the arm belonged ascended step by step to the level of the chapel floor. The form and face of the being who thus presented himself were those of a frightful dwarf, with a large head, a cap fantastically adorned with three peacock-feathers, a dress of red samite, the richness of which rendered his ugliness more conspicuous, distinguished by gold bracelets and armlets, and a white silk sash, in which

he wore a gold-hilted dagger. This singular figure had in his left hand a kind of broom.

The dwarf again whistled, and summoned from beneath a companion. This second figure ascended in the same manner as the first; but it was a female arm, in this 5 second instance, which upheld the lamp from the subterranean vault out of which these presentments arose, and it was a female form, much resembling the first in shape and proportions, which slowly emerged from the floor. Sir Kenneth remained as if spellbound, while this unlovely 10 pair moving round the chapel appeared to perform the duty of sweeping it, but, as they only used one hand, the floor was not much benefited by the exercise.

“I am the dwarf Nectabanus,” said the male, in a voice corresponding to his figure, and resembling the 15 voice of the night-crow more than any sound which is heard by daylight.

“And I am Guenevra, his lady and his love,” replied the female, in tones which, being shriller, were yet wilder than those of her companion.

“Hush,” said a voice from the side upon which the knight had entered, “hush, fools, and begone! Your ministry is ended.”

A few minutes after they had retired, the door at which the knight had entered opened slowly, and, remaining ajar, 25 discovered a faint light arising from a lantern placed upon the threshold. Its doubtful and wavering gleam showed a dark form reclined beside the entrance, which, on approaching it more nearly, he recognized to be the hermit.

“All is over,” said the hermit, as he heard the knight approaching. “Take the light, and guide me down the descent, for I may not uncover my eyes until I am far from this hallowed spot.”

The Scottish knight obeyed in silence, for a solemn and yet ecstatic sense of what he had seen had silenced even the eager workings of curiosity. He led the way, with considerable accuracy, through the various secret 5 passages and stairs by which they had ascended, until at length they found themselves in the outward cell of the hermit's cavern.

The hermit laid aside the veil with which his eyes had been bound, and looked at it with a suppressed and hollow 10 sigh. No sooner had he restored it to the crypt from which he had caused the Scot to bring it, than he said hastily and sternly to his companion, "Begone, begone—to rest, to rest! You may sleep—you can sleep—I neither can, nor may."

15 Upon his awaking in the morning the knight held certain conferences with the hermit upon matters of importance, and the result of their intercourse induced him to remain for two days longer in the grotto. He was regular, as became a pilgrim, in his devotional exercises, 20 but was not again admitted to the chapel in which he had seen such wonders.

CHAPTER V.

THE scene must change, from the mountain wilderness of Jordan to the camp of King Richard of England, then stationed betwixt Jean d'Acre and Ascalon, and containing that army with which he of the Lion Heart had promised himself a triumphant march to Jerusalem, and in which he would probably have succeeded, if not hindered by the jealousies of the Christian princes 25

engaged in the same enterprise, and the offence taken by them at the uncurbed haughtiness of the English monarch and Richard's unveiled contempt for his brother sovereigns, who, his equals in rank, were yet far his inferiors in courage, hardihood, and military talents. Such discords, 5 and particularly those betwixt Richard and Philip of France, created disputes and obstacles which impeded every active measure proposed by the heroic, impetuous Richard, while the ranks of the Crusaders were daily thinned, not only by the desertion of individuals, but of 10 entire bands, headed by their respective feudal leaders, who withdrew from a contest in which they had ceased to hope for success.

These evils were, in a great measure, counterbalanced by the stern resolution and restless activity of King 15 Richard, who, with some of his best knights, was ever on horseback, ready to repair to any point where danger occurred, and often not only bringing unexpected succour to the Christians, but discomfiting the infidels when they seemed most secure of victory. But even the iron frame 20 of Cœur de Lion, could not support, without injury, the alternations of the unwholesome climate, joined to ceaseless exertions of body and mind. He became afflicted with one of those slow and wasting fevers peculiar to Asia, and, in despite of his great strength, and still 25 greater courage, grew first unfit to mount on horseback, and then unable to attend the councils of war which were, from time to time, held by the Crusaders. It was difficult to say whether this state of personal inactivity was rendered more galling or more endurable to the 30 English monarch by the resolution of the council to engage in a truce of thirty days with the Sultan Saladin; for, on the one hand, if he was incensed at the delay which this interposed to the progress of the great enterprise,

he was, on the other, somewhat consoled by knowing that others were not acquiring laurels while he remained inactive upon a sick-bed.

It was on the decline of a Syrian day that Richard
5 lay on his couch of sickness, loathing it as much in mind as his illness made it irksome to his body. His bright blue eye, which at all times shone with uncommon keenness and splendour, had its vivacity augmented by fever and mental impatience, and glanced from among his
10 curled and unshorn locks of yellow hair as fitfully and as vividly as the last gleams of the sun shoot through the clouds of an approaching thunderstorm, which still, however, are gilded by its beams. His manly features showed the progress of wasting illness, and his beard,
15 neglected and untrimmed, had overgrown both lips and chin. Casting himself from side to side, now clutching towards him the coverings, which at the next moment he flung as impatiently from him, his tossed couch and impatient gestures showed at once the energy and the
20 reckless impatience of a disposition whose natural sphere was that of the most active exertion.

Beside his couch stood his faithful attendant Thomas de Vaux, Lord of Gilsland, in face, attitude, and manner the strongest possible contrast to the suffering monarch.
25 His stature approached the gigantic, and his hair in thickness might have resembled that of Samson, though only after the Israelitish champion's locks had passed under the shears of the Philistines, for those of De Vaux were cut short, that they might be inclosed under
30 his helmet.

“So thou hast no better news to bring me from without, Sir Thomas?” said the king, after a long and perturbed silence, spent in feverish agitation. “All our knights turned women, and our ladies become

devotees, and neither a spark of valour nor of gallantry to enlighten a camp which contains the choicest of Europe's chivalry—ha!"

"The truce, my lord," said De Vaux, with the same patience with which he had twenty times repeated the explanation, "the truce prevents us bearing ourselves as men of action; and, for the ladies, I am no great reveller, as is well known to your Majesty, and seldom exchange steel and buff for velvet and gold—but thus far I know, that our choicest beauties are waiting upon the Queen's Majesty and the Princess, to a pilgrimage to the convent of Engaddi, to accomplish their vows for your Highness's deliverance from this trouble."

"And is it thus," said Richard, with the impatience of indisposition, "that royal matrons and maidens should risk themselves, where the dogs who defile the land have as little truth to man as they have faith towards God?"

"Nay, my lord," said De Vaux, "they have Saladin's word for their safety."

20

"True—true!" replied Richard, "and I did the heathen soldan injustice; I owe him reparation for it. Would God I were but fit to offer it him upon my body between the two hosts, Christendom and Heathenesse both looking on!"

"But," added Richard, "why do not the powers assemble and choose some one to whom they may entrust the guidance of the host?"

"Forsooth, and if it please your Majesty," said De Vaux, "I hear consultations have been held among the royal leaders for some such purpose."

30

"Ha!" exclaimed Richard, his jealousy awakened, giving his mental irritation another direction. "Am I forgot by my allies ere I have taken the last sacrament? Do they hold me dead already? But no, no—they are

right. And whom do they select as leader of the Christian host?"

"Rank and dignity," said De Vaux, "point to the King of France."

5 "Oh, ay," answered the English monarch, "Philip of France and Navarre—his Most Christian Majesty!—mouth-filling words these! There is but one risk—that he might mistake the words *En arrière* for *En avant*, and lead us back to Paris, instead of marching to Jerusalem."

10 "They might choose the Archduke of Austria," said De Vaux.

"What! because he is big and burly like thyself, Thomas—nearly as thick-headed, but without thy indifference to danger, and carelessness of offence? I tell thee that Austria has in all that mass of flesh no bolder animation than is afforded by the peevishness of a wasp and the courage of a wren."

15 "There is the Grand Master of the Templars," continued the baron, "undaunted, skilful, brave in battle, and sage in council, having no separate kingdoms of his own to divert his exertions from the recovery of the Holy Land—what thinks your Majesty of the Master as a general leader of the Christian host?"

20 "Ha, Beau-Seant?" answered the King. "Oh, no exception can be taken to Brother Giles Amaury; he understands the ordering of a battle, and the fighting in front when it begins. But, Sir Thomas, were it fair to take the Holy Land from the heathen Saladin, so full of all the virtues which may distinguish unchristened man, 25 and give it to Giles Amaury, a worse Pagan than himself, an idolater, a devil-worshipper, a necromancer, who practises crimes the most dark and unnatural, in the vaults and secret places of abomination and darkness?"

25 "The Grand Master of the Hospitallers of St. John of

Jerusalem is not tainted by fame either with heresy or magic," said Thomas de Vaux.

"But is he not a sordid miser?" said Richard, hastily. "Has he not been suspected—ay, more than suspected—of selling to the infidels those advantages which they 5 would never have won by fair force?"

"Well, then, I will venture but another guess," said the Baron de Vaux. "What say you to the gallant Marquis of Montserrat, so wise, so elegant, such a good man-at-arms?" 10

"Wise! cunning, you would say," replied Richard; "elegant in a lady's chamber, if you will. Oh, ay, Comrade of Montserrat—who knows not the popinjay? Politic and versatile, he will change you his purposes as often as the trimmings of his doublet. But hark, 15 what trumpets are those at a distance?"

"Those of King Philip, as I guess, my liege," said the stout Englishman.

"Thou art dull of ear, Thomas," said the king, endeavouring to start up; "hearest thou not that clash and 20 clang? By Heaven, the Turks are in the camp. I hear their *lelies*."

He again endeavoured to get out of bed, and De Vaux was obliged to exercise his own great strength, and also to summon the assistance of the chamberlains from the 25 inner tent, to restrain him.

"Mine honest, faithful servant," said Richard, "forgive thy master's impatience of mood. But go, I prithee, and bring me word what strangers are in the camp, for these sounds are not of Christendom." 30

CHAPTER VI.

THOMAS DE VAUX had not made many steps beyond the entrance of the royal pavilion, when he was aware of what the far more acute ear of the English monarch, no mean proficient in the art of minstrelsy, had instantly discovered, that the musical strains, namely, which had reached their ears were produced by the pipes, shalms, and kettledrums of the Saracens; and at the bottom of an avenue of tents, which formed a broad access to the pavilion of Richard, he could see a crowd of idle soldiers assembled around the spot from which the music was heard, almost in the centre of the camp; and he saw, with great surprise, mingled amid the helmets of various forms worn by the Crusaders of different nations, white turbans and long pikes, announcing the presence of armed Saracens.

The first person whom he met advancing to him he set down at once, by his grave and haughty step, as a Spaniard or a Scot; and presently after muttered to himself, “ And a Scot it is—he of the Leopard.—I have seen him fight indifferently well, for one of his country.”

Loath to ask even a passing question, he was about to pass Sir Kenneth, with that sullen and lowering port which seems to say, “ I know thee, but I will hold no communication with thee;” but his purpose was defeated by the Northern knight who moved forward directly to him, and accosting him with formal courtesy, said, “ My Lord de Vaux of Gilsland, I have in charge to speak with you.”

“ Ha ! ” returned the English baron, “ with me ? But say your pleasure, so it be shortly spoken ; I am on the King’s errand.”

"Mine" touches King Richard yet more nearly," answered Sir Kenneth. "I bring him, I trust, health."

The Lord of Gilsland measured the Scot with incredulous eyes, and replied, "Thou art no leech, I think, sir Scot. I had as soon thought of your bringing the King 5 of England wealth."

"In plain language, then," said the Scot, "I bring with me a Moorish physician who undertakes to work a cure on King Richard."

"A Moorish physician!" said De Vaux. "And who 10 will warrant that he brings not poisons instead of remedies?"

"His own life, my lord—his head, which he offers as a guarantee."

"I have known many a resolute ruffian," said De 15 Vaux, "who valued his own life as little as it deserved, and would troop to the gallows as merrily as if the hangman were his partner in a dance."

"But thus it is, my lord," replied the Scot. "Saladin, to whom none will deny the credit of a generous and 20 valiant enemy, hath sent this leech hither with an honourable retinue and guard, befitting the high estimation in which El Hakim is held by the soldan, and with fruits and refreshments for the king's private chamber, and such message as may pass betwixt honourable enemies, praying 25 him to be recovered of his fever, that he may be the fitter to receive a visit from the soldan, with his naked scimitar in his hand, and an hundred thousand cavaliers at his back. Will it please you, who are of the king's secret council, to cause these camels to be discharged of their burdens, and 30 some order taken as to the reception of the learned physician?"

"Wonderful!" said De Vaux, as speaking to himself. "And who will vouch for the honour of Saladin, in a case

when bad faith would rid him at once of his most powerful adversary?"

"I myself," replied Sir Kenneth, "will be his guarantee, with honour, life, and fortune."

5 "Strange!" again ejaculated De Vaux. "The North vouches for the South--the Scot for the Turk! May I crave of you, sir knight, how you became concerned in this affair?"

"I have been absent on a pilgrimage, in the course of 10 which," replied Sir Kenneth, "I had a message to discharge towards the holy hermit of Engaddi."

"May I not be intrusted with it, Sir Kenneth, and with the answer of the holy man?"

"It may not be, my lord," answered the Scot.

15 "I am of the secret council of England," said the Englishman, haughtily.

"To which land I owe no allegiance," said Kenneth. "Though I have voluntarily followed in this war the personal fortunes of England's sovereign, I was despatched 20 by the General Council of the kings, princes, and supreme leaders of the army of the Blessed Cross, and to them only I render my errand."

"Ha! say'st thou?" said the proud Baron de Vaux. "But know, messenger of the kings and princes as thou 25 mayst be, no leech shall approach the sick-bed of Richard of England, without the consent of him of Gilsland; and they will come on evil errand who dare to intrude themselves against it."

"Well, then," said the Scottish knight, "let me swear 30 to you, Thomas of Gilsland, that as I am true Scottish man, which I hold a privilege equal to my ancient gentry, and as sure as I am a belted knight, and come hither to acquire *los* and fame in this mortal life, and forgiveness of my sins in that which is to come, so truly, and by the blessed

Cross which I wear, do I protest unto you, that I desire but the safety of Richard Cœur de Lion, in recommending the ministry of this Moslem physician."

The Englishman was struck with the solemnity of the obtestation, and answered with more cordiality than he 5 had yet exhibited—

"Tell me, Sir Knight of the Leopard, granting (which I do not doubt) that thou art thyself satisfied in this matter, shall I do well, in a land where the art of poisoning is as general as that of cooking, to bring this unknown 10 physician to practise with his drugs on a health so valuable to Christendom ? "

"My lord," replied the Scot, "thus only can I reply ; that my squire, the only one of my retinue whom war and disease had left in attendance on me, has been of late 15 suffering dangerously under this same fever which, in valiant King Richard, has disabled the principal limb of our holy enterprise. This leech, this *El Hakim*, hath ministered remedies to him not two hours since, and already he hath fallen into a refreshing sleep. That he 20 *can* cure the disorder, which has proved so fatal, I nothing doubt ; that he hath the purpose to do it is, I think, warranted by his mission from the royal soldan, who is true-hearted and loyal, so far as a blinded infidel may be called so ; and, for his eventual success, the 25 certainty of reward in case of succeeding, and punishment in case of voluntary failure, may be a sufficient guarantee."

The Englishman listened with downcast looks, as one who doubted, yet was not unwilling to receive conviction. 30 At length he looked up and said—

"May I see your sick squire, fair sir ? "

The Scottish knight hesitated and coloured, yet answered at last—

“Willingly, my Lord of Gilsland; but you must remember, when you see my poor quarter, that the nobles and knights of Scotland feed not so high, sleep not so soft, and care not for the magnificence of lodgment, which is proper to their Southern neighbours. I am *poorly* lodged, my Lord of Gilsland,” he added, with a haughty emphasis on the word, while, with some unwillingness, he led the way to his temporary place of abode.

The interior of the hut was chiefly occupied by two beds. One was empty, but composed of collected leaves, and spread with an antelope’s hide. It seemed, from the articles of armour laid beside it, and from a crucifix of silver, carefully and reverentially disposed at the head, to be the couch of the knight himself. The other contained the invalid, of whom Sir Kenneth had spoken, a strong-built and harsh-featured man, past, as his looks betokened, the middle age of life. In an outward part of the hut, which yet was within the range of the English baron’s eye, a boy, rudely attired with buskins of deer’s hide, a blue cap or bonnet, and a doublet, whose original finery was much tarnished, sat on his knees by a chafing-dish filled with charcoal, cooking upon a plate of iron the cakes of barley-bread, which were then, and still are, a favourite food with the Scottish people. Part of an antelope was suspended against one of the main props of the hut, nor was it difficult to know how it had been procured; for a large stag greyhound, nobler in size and appearance than those even which guarded King Richard’s sick-bed, lay eyeing the process of baking the cake. The sagacious animal (Roswal by name), on their first entrance, uttered a stifled growl, which sounded from his deep chest like distant thunder. But he saw his master, and acknowledged his presence by wagging his tail and couching his head, abstaining from more tumultuous or noisy greeting, as if

his noble instinct had taught him the propriety of silence in a sick man's chamber.

Beside the couch sat on a cushion, also composed of skins, the Moorish physician of whom Sir Kenneth had spoken, cross-legged, after the Eastern fashion. The imperfect light showed little of him, save that the lower part of his face was covered with a long black beard, which descended over his breast; that he wore a high *tolpach*, a Tartar cap of the lamb's wool manufactured at Astracan, bearing the same dusky colour, and that his ample caftan, 10 or Turkish robe, was also of a dark hue. Two piercing eyes, which gleamed with unusual lustre, were the only lineaments of his visage that could be discerned amid the darkness in which he was enveloped. Nothing was, for a time, heard but the heavy and regular breathings of the 15 invalid, who seemed in profound repose.

"He hath not slept for six nights before," said Sir Kenneth, "as I am assured by the youth, his attendant."

"In the name of Issa ben Miriam," said the physician, "whom we honour as you, though not with the same blinded 20 superstition, disturb not the effect of the blessed medicine of which he hath partaken. To awaken him now is death or deprivation of reason; but return at the hour when the muezzin calls from the minaret to evening prayer in the mosque, and, if left undisturbed until then, I promise you 25 this same Frankish soldier shall be able, without prejudice to his health, to hold some brief converse with you, on any matters on which either, and especially his master, may have to question him."

The knights retreated before the authoritative commands of the leech, who seemed fully to comprehend the importance of the Eastern proverb, that the sick-chamber of the patient is the kingdom of the physician.

The two warriors parted much better friends than they

had met; but ere they separated, Thomas de Vaux informed himself at more length of the circumstances attending the mission of the Eastern physician, and received from the Scottish knight the credentials which he had brought 5 to King Richard on the part of Saladin.

CHAPTER VII.

“THIS is a strange tale, Sir Thomas,” said the sick monarch, when he had heard the report of the trusty Baron of Gilsland. “Art thou sure this Scottish man is a tall man and true?”

10 “It is your Majesty’s business more than mine to note men’s bearings; and I warrant you have noted the manner in which this man of the Leopard hath borne himself. He hath been full well spoken of.”

15 “And justly, Thomas,” said the king. “We have ourselves witnessed him. It is indeed our purpose, in placing ourselves ever in the front of battle, to see how our liegemen and followers acquit themselves, and not from a desire to accumulate vainglory to ourselves, as some have supposed.

20 “Yes,” continued Richard, “I have indeed marked the manner in which this knight does his devoir. My leading-staff were not worth a fool’s bauble, had he escaped my notice; and he had ere now tasted of our bounty, but that I have also marked his overweening 25 and audacious presumption.”

“My liege,” said the Baron of Gilsland, observing the king’s countenance change, “I fear I have transgressed your pleasure in lending some countenance to his transgression.”

“ How, De Multon, thou ? ” said the king, contracting his brows, and speaking in a tone of angry surprise. “ Thou countenance his insolence ? It cannot be.”

“ Nay, your Majesty will pardon me to remind you that I have by mine office right to grant liberty to men 5 of gentle blood to keep them a hound or two within camp, just to cherish the noble art of *venerie* ; and besides, it were a sin to have maimed or harmed a thing so noble as this gentleman’s dog.”

“ Has he then a dog so handsome ? ” said the king. 10

“ A most perfect creature of heaven,” said the baron, who was an enthusiast in field-sports, “ of the noblest Northern breed—deep in the chest, strong in the stern, black colour, and brindled on the breast and legs—not spotted with white, but just shaded into gray—strength 15 to pull down a bull, swiftness to cote an antelope.”

The king laughed at his enthusiasm. “ Well, thou hast given him leave to keep the hound, so there is an end of it. Say’st thou the Scot met the leech in the desert ? ” 20

“ No, my liege, the Scot’s tale runs thus :—He was despatched to the old hermit of Engaddi, of whom men talk so much—— ”

“ By whom despatched, and for what ? ” exclaimed Richard. “ Who dared send any one thither, when 25 our Queen was in the Convent of Engaddi, upon her pilgrimage for our recovery ? ”

“ The Council of the Crusade sent him, my lord,” answered the Baron de Vaux ; “ for what purpose, he declined to account to me. I think it is scarce known 30 in the camp that your royal consort is on a pilgrimage, and even the princes may not have been aware, as the Queen has been sequestered from company since your love prohibited her attendance in case of infection.”

“ Well, it shall be looked into,” said Richard. “ So this Scottish man, this envoy, met with a wandering physician at the grotto of Engaddi—ha ? ”

“ Not so, my liege,” replied De Vaux; “ but he met, 5 I think, near that place, with a Saracen emir with whom he had some *mélée* in the way of proof of valour, and, finding him worthy to bear brave men company, they went together, as errant knights are wont, to the grotto of Engaddi.”

10 Here De Vaux stopped, for he was not one of those who can tell a long story in a sentence.

“ And did they there meet the physician ? ” demanded the king, impatiently.

“ No, my liege,” replied De Vaux; “ but the Saracen, 15 learning your Majesty’s grievous illness, undertook that Saladin should send his own physician to you, and with many assurances of his eminent skill; and he came to the grotto accordingly, after the Scottish knight had tarried a day for him and more. He is attended as if 20 he were a prince, with drums and atabals, and servants on horse and foot, and brings with him letters of credence from Saladin.”

“ Have they been examined ? ”

“ I showed them to the interpreter ere bringing them 25 hither, and behold their contents in English.”

Richard took a scroll, in which were inscribed these words—

“ The blessing of Allah and his Prophet Mohammed ” [“ Out upon the hound ! ” said Richard, spitting in contempt, by way 30 of interjection.] “ Saladin, king of kings, Soldan of Egypt and of Syria, the light and refuge of the earth, to the great Melech Ric, Richard of England, greeting. Whereas we have been informed that the hand of sickness hath been heavy upon thee,

our royal brother, and that thou hast with thee only such Nazarene and Jewish mediciners as work without the blessing of Allah and our holy Prophet” [“Confusion on his head !” again muttered the English monarch], “we have therefore sent to tend and wait upon thee at this time the physician to our own person, Adonbec el Hakim, before whose face the angel Azrael spreads his wings, and departs from the sick-chamber ; who knows the virtues of herbs and stones, the path of the sun, moon, and stars, and can save man from all that is not written on his forehead. And this we do, praying you heartily 10 to honour and make use of his skill ; not only that we may do service to thy worth and valour, which is the glory of all the nations of Frangistan, but that we may bring the controversy which is at present between us to an end, either by honourable agreement, or by open trial thereof with our weapons, in a fair 15 field ; seeing that it neither becomes thy place and courage to die the death of a slave who hath been overwrought by his taskmaster, nor befits it our fame that a brave adversary be snatched from our weapon by such a disease. And, therefore, may the holy—”

20

“Hold, hold,” said Richard, “I will have no more of his dog of a Prophet! It makes me sick to think the valiant and worthy soldan should believe in a dead dog. Yes, I will see his physician. I will put myself into the charge of this Hakim. I will repay the noble soldan 25 his generosity. Haste, De Vaux, why dost thou delay a conclusion so pleasing? Fetch the Hakim hither.”

“My lord,” said the baron, who perhaps saw some accession of fever in this overflow of confidence, “bethink you, the soldan is a pagan, and that you are his most 30 formidable enemy—”

“For which reason he is the more bound to do me service in this matter, lest a paltry fever end the quarrel betwixt two such kings. I tell thee, he loves me as I

love him—as noble adversaries ever love each other; by my honour, it were sin to doubt his good faith!"

"Nevertheless, my lord, it were well to wait the issue of these medicines upon the Scottish squire," said the Lord 5 of Gilsland. "My own life depends upon it, for worthy were I to die like a dog, did I proceed rashly in this matter, and make shipwreck of the weal of Christendom."

"I never knew thee before hesitate for fear of life," said Richard, upbraidingly."

10 "Nor would I now, my liege," replied the stout-hearted baron, "save that yours lies at pledge as well as my own."

15 "Well, thou suspicious mortal," answered Richard, "begone then, and watch the progress of this remedy. I could almost wish it might either cure or kill me, for I am weary of lying here like an ox dying of the murrain, when tambours are beating, horses stamping, and trumpets sounding without."

20 The baron hastily departed, resolved, however, to communicate his errand to some churchman, as he felt something burdened in conscience at the idea of his master being attended by an unbeliever.

25 The Archbishop of Tyre was the first to whom he confided his doubts, knowing his interest with his master, Richard, who both loved and honoured that sagacious prelate. The baron showed him the letters of credence. He read and re-read them, and compared the original with the translation.

30 "It is a dish choicely cooked," he said, "to the palate of King Richard, and I cannot but have my suspicions of the wily Saracen. "But come, my Lord de Vaux," he continued, "wend we to the tent of this sick squire, where we shall learn whether this Hakim hath really the art of curing which he professeth, ere we consider whether there

be safety in permitting him to exercise his art upon King Richard."

When the Bishop of Tyre entered the hut of the Scottish knight, the master was absent; and the Moorish physician, whom he had come to see, sat in the very 5 posture in which De Vaux had left him several hours before, cross-legged upon a mat made of twisted leaves, by the side of the patient, who appeared in deep slumber, and whose pulse he felt from time to time. The bishop remained standing before him in silence for two or three 10 minutes, as if expecting some honourable salutation, or at least that the Saracen would seem struck with the dignity of his appearance. But Adonbec el Hakim took no notice of him beyond a passing glance, and when the prelate at length saluted him in the *lingua franca* current 15 in the country, he only replied by the ordinary Oriental greeting, "*Salam alicum*—peace be with you."

"Art thou a physician, infidel?" said the bishop, somewhat mortified at this cold reception. "I would speak with thee on that art."

"If thou knewst aught of medicine," answered El Hakim, "thou wouldst be aware that physicians hold no counsel or debate in the sick-chamber of their patient. Hear," he added, as the low growling of the stag-hound was heard from the inner hut, "even the dog might 25 teach thee reason, *ulemat*. His instinct teaches him to suppress his barking in the sick man's hearing. Come without the tent," said he, rising and leading the way, "if thou hast aught to say with me."

"I would have ocular proof of thy skill," said the 30 baron, "and without it thou approachest not to the couch of King Richard."

"The praise of the physician," said the Arabian, "is in the recovery of his patient. Behold this sergeant, whose

blood has been dried up by the fever which has whitened your camp with skeletons, and against which the art of your Nazarene leeches hath been like a silken doublet against a lance of steel. Look at his fingers and arms, 5 wasted like the claws and shanks of the crane. Death had this morning his clutch on him ; but had Azrael been on one side of the couch, I being on the other, his soul should not have been reft from his body. Disturb me not with further questions, but await the critical minute. 10 and behold in silent wonder the marvellous event."

The physician had then recourse to his astrolabe, the oracle of Eastern science, and, watching with grave precision until the precise time of the evening prayer had arrived, he sank on his knees, with his face turned to 15 Mecca, and recited the petitions which close the Moslemah's day of toil.

The Arab arose from the earth, and, walking into the hut where the patient lay extended, he drew a sponge from a small silver box, dipped perhaps in some 20 aromatic distillation ; for when he put it to the sleeper's nose, he sneezed, awoke, and looked wildly around. He was a ghastly spectacle, as he sat up almost naked on his couch, the bones and cartilages as visible through the surface of his skin as if they had never been clothed 25 with flesh ; his face was long, and furrowed with wrinkles, but his eye, though it wandered at first, became gradually more settled. He seemed to be aware of the presence of his dignified visitors, for he attempted feebly to pull the covering from his head, in token of reverence, as he 30 inquired, in a subdued and submissive voice, for his master.

" Do you know us, vassal ? " said the Lord of Gilsland.

" Not perfectly, my lord," replied the squire, faintly. " My sleep has been long and full of dreams. Yet I

know that you are a great English lord, as seemeth by the red cross, and this a holy prelate, whose blessing I crave on me a poor sinner."

"Thou hast it; *Benedictio Domini sit vobiscum*," said the prelate, making the sign of the cross, but without 5 approaching nearer to the patient's bed.

"Your eyes witness," said the Arabian, "the fever hath been subdued; he speaks with calmness and recollection, his pulse beats composedly as yours—try its pulsations yourself." 10

The prelate declined the experiment; but Thomas of Gilsland, more determined on making the trial, did so, and satisfied himself that the fever was indeed gone.

"This is most wonderful," said the knight, looking to the bishop: "the man is assuredly cured. I must 15 conduct this mediciner presently to King Richard's tent. What thinks your reverence?"

"Stay, let me finish one cure ere I commence another," said the Arab. "I will pass with you when I have given my patient the second cup of this most holy elixir." 20

So saying, he pulled out a silver cup, and, filling it with water from a gourd which stood by the bedside, he next drew forth a small silken bag, made of network, twisted with silver, the contents of which the bystanders could not discover, and, immersing it in the cup, continued to watch it in silence during the space of five minutes. It seemed to the spectators as if some effervescence took place during the operation; but if so, it instantly subsided.

"Drink," said the physician to the sick man, "sleep, 30 and awaken free from malady."

"And with this simple-seeming draught thou wilt undertake to cure a monarch?" said the Bishop of Tyre.

"I have cured a beggar, as you may behold," replied

the sage. “Are the kings of Frangistan made of other clay than the meanest of their subjects?”

“Let us have him presently to the king,” said the Baron of Gilsland. “He hath shown that he possesses the secret which may restore his health. If he fails to exercise it, I will put himself past the power of medicine.”

CHAPTER VIII.

SCARCE had Thomas de Vaux left the royal pavilion, when, betwixt the impatience of the fever and that which was natural to his disposition, Richard began to murmur at his delay, and express an earnest desire for his return. At length, some two hours before sundown, and long, therefore, ere he could expect a satisfactory account of the process of the cure which the Moor or Arabian had undertaken, he sent, as we have already heard, a messenger commanding the attendance of the Knight of the Leopard, determined to sooth his impatience by obtaining from Sir Kenneth a more particular account of the cause of his absence from the camp, and the circumstances of his meeting with this celebrated physician.

The Scottish knight, thus summoned, entered the royal presence, as one who was no stranger to such scenes.

“Thy name,” said the king, “is Kenneth of the Leopard. From whom hadst thou degree of knighthood?”

“I took it from the sword of William the Lion, King of Scotland,” replied the Scot.

“A weapon,” said the king, “well worthy to confer honour, nor has it been laid on an undeserving shoulder. We have seen thee bear thyself knightly and valiantly in

press of battle, when most need there was ; and thou hadst not been yet to learn that thy deserts were known to us, but that thy presumption in other points has been such that thy services can challenge no better reward than that of pardon for thy transgression. What say'st thou—ha ? ” 5

Kenneth attempted to speak, but was unable to express himself distinctly ; the consciousness of his too ambitious love, and the keen falcon glance with which Cœur de Lion seemed to penetrate his inmost soul, combining to disconcert him. 10

“ And yet,” said the king, “ although soldiers should obey command, and vassals be respectful towards their superiors, we might forgive a brave knight greater offence than the keeping a simple hound, though it were contrary to our express public ordinance.” 15

Richard kept his eye fixed on the Scot's face, beheld, and beholding smiled inwardly at the relief produced by the turn he had given to his general accusation.

“ So please you, my lord,” said the Scot, “ your Majesty must be good to us poor gentlemen of Scotland 20 in this matter. We are far from home, scant of revenues, and cannot support ourselves as your wealthy nobles, who have credit of the Lombards. The Saracens shall feel our blows the harder that we eat a piece of dried venison from time to time with our herbs and barley-cakes.” 25

“ But enough of this. I desire to know of you, sir knight, wherefore, and by whose authority, you took this recent journey to the wilderness of the Dead Sea, and Engaddi ? ”

“ By order,” replied the knight, “ of the Council of the 30 Princes of the Holy Crusade.”

“ And how dared any one to give such an order, when I—not the least, surely, in the league—was unacquainted with it ? ”

“ It was not my part, please your Highness,” said the Scot, “ to inquire into such particulars. I am a soldier of the Cross—serving, doubtless, for the present, under your Highness’s banner, and proud of the permission to do so—
5 but still one who hath taken on him the holy symbol for the rights of Christianity, and the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, and bound, therefore, to obey, without question, the orders of the princes and chiefs by whom the blessed enterprise is directed.”

10 “ Thou say’st well,” said King Richard; “ and the blame rests not with thee, but with those with whom, when it shall please Heaven to raise me from this accursed bed of pain and inactivity, I hope to reckon roundly. What was the purport of thy message ? ”

15 “ Methinks, and please your Highness,” replied Sir Kenneth, “ that were best asked of those who sent me, and who can render the reasons of mine errand; whereas, I can only tell its outward form and purport.”

“ Palter not with me, sir Scot; it were ill for thy
20 safety,” said the irritable monarch.

“ My safety, my lord,” replied the knight, firmly, “ I cast behind me as a regardless thing when I vowed myself to this enterprise, looking rather to my immortal welfare than to that which concerns my earthly body.”

25 “ By the mass,” said King Richard, “ thou art a brave fellow ! Hark thee, sir knight, I love the Scottish people: they are hardy, though dogged and stubborn, and, I think, true men in the main, though the necessity of state has sometimes constrained them to be dissemblers.
30 I deserve some love at their hand, and for the good offices I have done your land, I require you to remember that, as a principal member of the Christian league, I have a right to know the negotiations of my confederates. Do me, therefore, the justice to tell me what I have a title

to be acquainted with, and which I am certain to know more truly from you than from others."

"My lord," said the Scot, "thus conjured, I will speak the truth; for I well believe that your purposes towards the principal object of our expedition are single-hearted and honest; and it is more than I dare warrant for others of the Holy League. Be pleased, therefore, to know, my charge was to propose, through the medium of the hermit of Engaddi—a holy man, respected and protected by Saladin himself—"

"A continuation of the truce, I doubt not," said Richard, hastily interrupting him.

"No, by St. Andrew, my liege," said the Scottish knight; "but the establishment of a lasting peace, and the withdrawing our armies from Palestine."

"I must know more from you than you have yet told me. Saw you my royal consort when at Engaddi?"

"To my knowledge—no, my lord," replied Sir Kenneth, with considerable perturbation; for he remembered the midnight procession in the chapel of the rocks.

"I ask you," said the king, in a sterner voice, "whether you were not in the chapel of the Carmelite nuns at Engaddi, and there saw Berengaria, Queen of England, and the ladies of her Court, who went thither on pilgrimage?"

"My lord," said Sir Kenneth, "I will speak the truth as in the confessional. In a subterranean chapel, to which the anchorite conducted me, I beheld a choir of ladies do homage to a relic of the highest sanctity; but as I saw not their faces, nor heard their voices, unless in the hymns which they chanted, I cannot tell whether the Queen of England was of the bevy."

"And was there no one of these ladies known to you?"

Sir Kenneth stood silent.

“I ask you,” said Richard, raising himself on his elbow, “as a knight and a gentleman, and I shall know by your answer how you value either character—did you, or did 5 you not, know any lady amongst that band of worshippers?”

“My lord,” said Kenneth, not without much hesitation, “I might guess.”

“And I also may guess,” said the king, frowning 10 sternly; “but it is enough. Leopard as you are, sir knight, beware tempting the lion’s paw. Hark ye, to become enamoured of the moon would be but an act of folly; but to leap from the battlements of a lofty tower, in the wild hope of coming within her sphere, were self-15 destructive madness.”

At this moment some bustling was heard in the outer apartment, and the king, hastily changing to his more natural manner, said—

“Enough—begone—speed to De Vaux, and send him 20 hither with the Arabian physician. My life for the faith of the soldan! Would he but abjure his false law, I would aid him with my sword to drive this scum of French and Austrians from his dominions, and think Palestine as well ruled by him as when her kings were anointed by the 25 decree of Heaven itself.”

The Knight of the Leopard retired, and presently afterwards the chamberlain announced a deputation from the Council, who had come to wait on the Majesty of England.

30 “It is well they allow that I am living yet,” was his reply. “Who are the reverend ambassadors?”

“The Grand Master of the Templars and the Marquis of Montserrat.”

When the usual salutations had been made by these

dignitaries, and courteously returned by King Richard, the Marquis of Montserrat commenced an explanation of the motives of their visit, sent, as he said they were, by the anxious kings and princes who composed the Council of the Crusaders, “to inquire into the health of their 5 magnanimous ally, the valiant King of England.”

They informed the king that they came from the Council to pray, in the name of Christendom, “that he would not suffer his health to be tampered with by an infidel physician, said to be despatched by Saladin, until 10 the Council had taken measures to remove or confirm the suspicion which they at present conceived did attach itself to the mission of such a person.”

“Grand Master of the holy and valiant Order of Knights Templars, and you, most noble Marquis of Mont- 15 serrat,” replied Richard, “if it please you to retire into the adjoining pavilion, you shall presently see what account we make of the tender remonstrances of our royal and princely colleagues in this religious warfare.”

The marquis and Grand Master retired accordingly ; 20 nor had they been many minutes in the outward pavilion when the Eastern physician arrived, accompanied by the Baron of Gilsland and Kenneth of Scotland. The baron, however, was a little later of entering the tent than the other two, stopping, perchance, to issue some orders to the 25 warders without.

As the Arabian physician entered, he made his obeisance, after the Oriental fashion, to the marquis and Grand Master, whose dignity was apparent, both from their appearance and their bearing. The Grand Master 30 returned the salutation with an expression of disdainful coldness ; the marquis, with the popular courtesy which he habitually practised to men of every rank and nation. There was a pause : for the Scottish knight, waiting for

the arrival of De Vaux, presumed not, of his own authority, to enter the tent of the King of England, and, during this interval, the Grand Master sternly demanded of the Moslem—

5 “Infidel, hast thou the courage to practise thine art upon the person of an anointed sovereign of the Christian host?”

“The sun of Allah,” answered the sage, “shines on the Nazarene as well as on the true believer; and his servant 10 dare make no distinction betwixt them, when called on to exercise the art of healing.”

“Misbelieving Hakim,” said the Grand Master, “or whatsoever they call thee for an unbaptized slave of darkness, dost thou well know that thou shalt be torn 15 asunder by wild horses should King Richard die under thy charge?”

“My lords,” said El Hakim, “I understand you well. I have the command of my sovereign, the Soldan Saladin, to heal this Nazarene king, and, with the blessing of the 20 Prophet, I will obey his commands. If I fail, ye wear swords thirsting for the blood of the faithful, and I proffer my body to your weapons.”

Richard, when they entered his apartment, immediately exclaimed, “So ho! a goodly fellowship come to see 25 Richard take his leap in the dark. My noble allies, I greet you as the representatives of our assembled league; Richard will again be amongst you in his former fashion, or ye shall bear to the grave what is left of him. De Vaux, lives he or dies he, thou hast the thanks of thy prince. 30 There is yet another—but this fever hath wasted my eyesight! What, the bold Scot, who would climb heaven without a ladder? He is welcome too. Come, Sir Hakim, to the work—to the work!”

The physician, who had already informed himself of

the various symptoms of the king's illness, now felt his pulse for a long time, and with deep attention, while all around stood silent, and in breathless expectation. The sage next filled a cup with spring water, and dipped into it the small red purse, which, as formerly, he took from his bosom. When he seemed to think it sufficiently medicated, he was about to offer it to the sovereign, who prevented him, by saying, "Hold an instant! Thou hast felt my pulse, let me lay my finger on thine. I too, as becomes a good knight, know something of thine art." 10

The Arabian yielded his hand without hesitation, and his long slender dark fingers were, for an instant, inclosed, and almost buried, in the large enfoldment of King Richard's hand.

"His blood beats calm as an infant's," said the 15 king; "so throb not theirs who poison princes. De Vaux, whether we live or die, dismiss this Hakim with honour and safety. Command us, friend, to the noble Saladin. Should I die, it is without doubt of his faith; should I live, it will be to thank him as a warrior would 20 desire to be thanked."

He then took the cup in his hand, drained it to the bottom, and sunk back upon the cushions which were arranged to receive him. The physician, with silent but expressive signs, directed that all should leave the tent 25 excepting himself and De Vaux, whom no remonstrance could induce to withdraw. The apartment was cleared accordingly.

[On leaving the royal pavilion, Conrade, Marquis of Montserrat, and Sir Giles Amaury, Grand Master of the Templars, 30 met together to discuss the prospects of the Crusade and the effects that success in it would have on their own personal interests. Conrade admitted that Richard would not favour his

ambition to become King of Jerusalem should the Crusaders overcome Saladin : and he then pointed out that the Knights of the Temple would have their power and influence curbed in case of success with Richard as leader. Both traitors agreed 5 that their common interests would be best served by the failure of the present Crusade. The Templar even suggested that Richard should not be allowed to rise from his sick-bed. Conrade, however, wished first to try to bring about failure by stirring up strife between the English king and Leopold of 10 Austria ; and the sight of the English banner on a mound in the centre of the camp gave him an idea of how this could be done.]

CHAPTER IX.

LEOPOLD, Grand Duke of Austria, was the first possessor of that noble country to whom the princely rank belonged. 15 He had been raised to the ducal sway in the German empire on account of his near relationship to the Emperor, Henry the Stern, and held under his government the finest provinces which are watered by the Danube. He was rather a weak and a vain than an ambitious or tyrannical 20 prince. His mental powers resembled the qualities of his person. He was tall, strong, and handsome, with a complexion in which red and white was strongly contrasted, and had long flowing locks of fair hair. But there was an awkwardness in his gait, which seemed as if his size 25 was not animated by energy sufficient to put in motion such a mass ; and in the same manner, wearing the richest dresses, it always seemed as if they became him not. As a prince, he appeared too little familiar with his own dignity, and, being often at a loss how to assert his

authority when the occasion demanded it, he frequently thought himself obliged to recover, by acts and expressions of ill-timed violence, the ground which might have been easily and gracefully maintained by a little more presence of mind in the beginning of the controversy.

5

When he first joined the Crusade, with a most princely attendance, Leopold had desired much to enjoy the friendship and intimacy of Richard, and had made such advances towards cultivating his regard as the King of England ought, in policy, to have received and answered. But the 10 archduke, though not deficient in bravery, was so infinitely inferior to *Cœur de Lion* in that ardour of mind which wooed danger as a bride, that the king very soon held him in a certain degree of contempt. Richard, also, as a Norman prince, a people with whom temperance was 15 habitual, despised the inclination of the German for the pleasures of the table, and particularly his liberal indulgence in the use of wine. For these and other personal reasons the King of England very soon looked upon the Austrian prince with feelings of contempt, which he was 20 at no pains to conceal or modify, and which, therefore, were speedily remarked, and returned with deep hatred, by the suspicious Leopold. The discord between them was fanned by the secret and politic arts of Philip of France, one of the most sagacious monarchs of the time, 25 who, dreading the fiery and overbearing character of Richard, considering him as his natural rival, and feeling offended, endeavoured to strengthen his own party, and weaken that of Richard, by uniting the Crusading princes of inferior degree in resistance to what he termed the 30 usurping authority of the King of England. Such was the state of politics and opinions entertained by the Archduke of Austria when Conrade of Montserrat resolved upon employing his jealousy of England as the means

of dissolving, or loosening at least, the league of the Crusaders.

The time which he chose for his visit was noon, and the pretence, to present the archduke with some choice 5 Cyprus wine which had lately fallen into his hands, and discuss its comparative merits with those of Hungary and of the Rhine. An intimation of his purpose was of course answered by a courteous invitation to partake of the archducal meal, and every effort was used to render it fitting to the splendour of a sovereign prince.

Sitting at the table of the archduke, Conrade was at once stunned and amused with the clang of Teutonic sounds assaulting his ears on all sides, notwithstanding the solemnity of a princely banquet. Their dress seemed 15 equally fantastic to him, many of the Austrian nobles retaining their long beards, and almost all of them wearing short jerkins of various colours, cut and flourished and fringed in a manner not common in Western Europe.

Numbers of dependants, old and young, attended in 20 the pavilion, mingled at times in the conversation, received from their masters the relics of the entertainment, and devoured them as they stood behind the backs of the company. Jesters, dwarfs, and minstrels were there in unusual numbers, and more noisy and intrusive than they 25 were permitted to be in better-regulated society.

All this while, and in the midst of a clamour and confusion which would better have become a German tavern during a fair than the tent of a sovereign prince, the archduke was waited upon with a minuteness of form 30 and observance which showed how anxious he was to maintain rigidly the state and character to which his elevation had entitled him. He was served on the knee, and only by pages of noble blood, fed upon plate of silver, and drank his Tokay and Rhenish wines from a cup of

gold. His ducal mantle was splendidly adorned with ermine, his coronet might have equalled in value a royal crown, and his feet, cased in velvet shoes (the length of which, peaks included, might be two feet), rested upon a footstool of solid silver. But it served partly to intimate 5 the character of the man, that, although desirous to show attention to the Marquis of Montserrat, whom he had courteously placed at his right hand, he gave much more of his attention to his *Spruch-sprecher*—that is, his man of conversation, or *sayer of sayings*, who stood behind the 10 duke's right shoulder.

This personage was well attired, in a cloak and doublet of black velvet, the last of which was decorated with various silver and gold coins stitched upon it, in memory of the munificent princes who had conferred them, and 15 bearing a short staff, to which also bunches of silver coins were attached by rings, which he jingled by way of attracting attention, when he was about to say anything which he judged worthy of it. This person's capacity in the household of the archduke was somewhat betwixt that 20 of a minstrel and a counsellor; he was by turns a flatterer, a poet, and an orator; and those who desired to be well with the duke generally studied to gain the good-will of the *Spruch-sprecher*.

Lest too much of this officer's wisdom should become 25 tiresome, the duke's other shoulder was occupied by his *Hoff-narr*, or court jester, called Jonas Schwanker, who made almost as much noise with his fool's cap, bells, and bauble as did the orator, or man of talk, with his jingling baton.

These two personages threw out grave and comic non-sense alternately, while their master, laughing or applauding them himself, yet carefully watched the countenance of his noble guest, to discern what impressions so accomplished

a cavalier received from this display of Austrian eloquence and wit. It is hard to say whether the man of wisdom or the man of folly contributed most to the amusement of the party, or stood highest in the estimation of their princely master; but the sallies of both seemed excellently well received.

It was not long ere the King of England was brought on the carpet by the jester, who had been accustomed to consider Dickon of the Broom (which irreverent epithet he substituted for Richard Plantagenet) as a subject of mirth, acceptable and inexhaustible. The orator, indeed, was silent, and it was only when applied to by Comrade that he observed—

“The *genista*, or broom-plant, was an emblem of humility; and it would be well when those who wore it would remember the warning.”

“Honour unto whom honour is due,” answered the Marquis of Montserrat. “We have all had some part in these marches and battles, and methinks other princes might share a little in the renown which Richard of England engrosses amongst minstrels and *minnesingers*. Has no one of the *joyeuse science* here present a song in praise of the royal Archduke of Austria, our princely entertainer? ”

Three minstrels emulously stepped forward with voice and harp. Two were silenced with difficulty by the *Spruch-sprecher*, who seemed to act as master of the revels, and a hearing was at length procured for the poet preferred, who sang in High German, stanzas which may be thus translated:—

What brave chief shall head the forces,
Where the red-cross legions gather?
Best of horsemen, best of horses,
Highest head and fairest feather.

Ask not Austria why, 'midst princes,
Still her banner rises highest;
Ask as well the strong-wing'd eagle
Why to heaven he soars the highest.

“The eagle,” said the expounder of dark sayings, “is 5 the cognisance of our noble lord the archduke—of his royal Grace, I would say—and the eagle flies the highest and nearest to the sun of all the feathered creation.”

“The lion hath taken a spring above the eagle,” said Conrade carelessly. 10

“Mean you seriously, my lord?” said the Austrian, now considerably flushed with wine. “Think you that Richard of England asserts any pre-eminence over the free sovereigns who have been his voluntary allies in this Crusade?” 15

“I know not but from circumstances,” answered Conrade. “Yonder hangs his banner alone in the midst of our camp, as if he were king and generalissimo of our whole Christian army.”

“And do you endure this so patiently, and speak of 20 it so coldly?” said the archduke.

“Nay, my lord,” answered Conrade, “it cannot concern the poor Marquis of Montserrat to contend against an injury patiently submitted to by such potent princes as Philip of France and Leopold of Austria. 25 What dishonour you are pleased to submit to cannot be a disgrace to me.”

Leopold closed his fist, and struck on the table with violence.

“I have told Philip of this,” he said. “I have 30 often told him that it was our duty to protect the inferior princes against the usurpation of this islander; but he answers me ever with cold respects of their relations together as suzerain and vassal, and that it were

impolitic in him to make an open breach at this time and period."

"The world knows that Philip is wise," said Conrade, "and will judge his submission to be policy. Yours, 5 my lord, you can yourself alone account for; but I doubt not you have deep reasons for submitting to English domination."

"*I submit!*" said Leopold, indignantly—"I, the Archduke of Austria, so important and vital a limb of 10 the Holy Roman Empire—I submit myself to this king of half an island! No, by Heaven! The camp, and all Christendom, shall see that I know how to right myself, and whether I yield ground one inch to the English bandog. Up, my lieges and merrymen, up and 15 follow me! We will—and that without losing one instant—place the eagle of Austria where she shall float as high as ever floated the cognisance of king or kaiser."

With that he started from his seat, and amidst the tumultuous cheering of his guests and followers, left the 20 pavilion, seized his own banner, which stood pitched before it, and then making his way to the mound, planted it beside the banner of England. Conrade quietly withdrew so soon as he saw the mischief afoot, while the Archduke of Austria distributed wine among the by- 25 standers, and a disorderly scene round the Austrian standard alarmed the whole camp.

CHAPTER X.

THE critical hour had arrived at which the physician, according to the rules of his art, had predicted that his royal patient might be awakened with safety, and the sponge had been applied for that purpose ; and the leech had not made many observations ere he assured the Baron 5 of Gilsland that the fever had entirely left his sovereign, and that such was the happy strength of his constitution, it would not be even necessary, as in most cases, to give a second dose of the powerful medicine. Richard himself seemed to be of the same opinion, for, sitting up and 10 rubbing his eyes, he demanded of De Vaux what present sum of money was in the royal coffers.

The baron could not exactly inform him of the amount.

“ It matters not,” said Richard ; “ be it greater or smaller, bestow it all on this learned leech, who hath, I 15 trust, given me back again to the service of the Crusade. If it be less than a thousand bezants, let him have jewels to make it up.”

“ I sell not the wisdom with which Allah has endowed me,” answered the Arabian physician ; “ and be it known 20 to you, great prince, that the divine medicine of which you have partaken would lose its effects in my unworthy hands, did I exchange its virtues either for gold or diamonds.”

“ The physician refuseth a gratuity ! ” said De Vaux 25 to himself. “ This is more extraordinary than his being a hundred years old.”

“ Thomas de Vaux,” said Richard, “ thou knowest no courage but what belongs to the sword, no bounty and virtue but what are used in chivalry ; I tell thee that 30

this Moor, in his independence, might set an example to them who account themselves the flower of knighthood."

"It is reward enough for me," said the Moor, folding his arms on his bosom, and maintaining an attitude at 5 once respectful and dignified, "that so great a king as the Melech Ric should thus speak of his servant. But now, let me pray you again to compose yourself on your couch; for though I think there needs no further repetition of the divine draught, yet injury might ensue from any too early 10 exertion, ere your strength be entirely restored."

"I must obey thee, Hakim," said the king; "yet, believe me, my bosom feels so free from the wasting fire, which for so many days hath scorched it, that I care not how soon I expose it to a brave man's lance. But hark! 15 what mean these shouts, and that distant music, in the camp? Go, Thomas de Vaux, and make inquiry."

"It is the Archduke Leopold," said De Vaux, returning after a minute's absence, "who makes with his pot-companions some procession through the camp."

20 "The drunken fool!" exclaimed King Richard. "Can he not keep his brutal ineptitude within the veil of his pavilion, that he must needs show his shame to all Christendom? What say you, sir Marquis?" he added, addressing himself to Conrade of Montserrat, who at that 25 moment entered the tent.

"What the archduke does," he said, "is of little consequence to anyone, least of all to himself, since he probably knows not what he is acting; yet, to say truth, it is a gambol I should not like to share in, since he 30 is pulling down the banner of England from St. George's Mount, in the centre of the camp yonder, and displaying his own in its stead."

"WHAT say'st thou?" exclaimed the king, in a tone which might have waked the dead.

“ Nay,” said the marquis, “ let it not chafe your Highness, that a fool should act according to his folly——”

“ Speak not to me,” said Richard, springing from his couch, and casting on his clothes with a despatch which 5 seemed marvellous—“ speak not to me, lord marquis! De Multon, I command thee, speak not a word to me; he that breathes but a syllable is no friend to Richard Plantagenet. Hakim, be silent, I charge thee !”

All this while the king was hastily clothing himself, 10 and, with the last word, snatched his sword from the pillar of the tent, and without any other weapon, or calling any attendance, he rushed out of his pavilion.

The king was soon at the foot of St. George’s Mount, the sides as well as platform of which were now sur- 15 rounded and crowded, partly by those belonging to the Duke of Austria’s retinue, who were celebrating, with shouts of jubilee, the act which they considered as an assertion of national honour; partly by bystanders of different nations, whom dislike to the English, or mere 20 curiosity, had assembled together, to witness the end of these extraordinary proceedings. Through this disorderly troop Richard burst his way, like a goodly ship under full sail, which cleaves her forcible passage through the rolling billows, and heeds not that they unite after her passage 25 and roar upon her stern.

“ Who has dared,” he said, laying his hands upon the Austrian standard, and speaking in a voice like the sound which precedes an earthquake—“ who has dared to place this paltry rag beside the banner of England ?” 30

The archduke wanted not personal courage, and it was impossible he could hear this question without reply. Yet, so much was he troubled and surprised by the unexpected arrival of Richard, and affected by the general

awe inspired by his ardent and unyielding character, that the demand was twice repeated, in a tone which seemed to challenge heaven and earth, ere the archduke replied, with such firmness as he could command—

5 “ It was I, Leopold of Austria.”

“ Then shall Leopold of Austria,” replied Richard, “ presently see the rate at which his banner and his pretensions are held by Richard of England.”

So saying, he pulled up the standard-spear, splintered it to pieces, threw the banner itself on the ground, and placed his foot upon it.

“ Thus,” said he, “ I trample on the banner of Austria ! Is there a knight among your Teutonic chivalry dare impeach my deed ? ”

15 There was a momentary silence ; but there are no braver men than the Germans.

“ I ! ” and “ I ! ” and “ I ! ” was heard from several knights of the duke’s followers ; and he himself added his voice to those which accepted the King of England’s

20 defiance.

“ Why do we dally thus ? ” said the Earl Wallenrode, a gigantic warrior from the frontiers of Hungary. “ Brethren, and noble gentlemen, this man’s foot is on the honour of your country. Let us rescue it from violation, and down with the pride of England ! ”

So saying, he drew his sword, and struck at the king a blow which might have proved fatal, had not the Scot intercepted and caught it upon his shield.

“ I have sworn,” said King Richard—and his voice 30 was heard above all the tumult, which now waxed wild and loud—“ never to strike one whose shoulder bears the cross ; therefore live, Wallenrode, but live to remember Richard of England.”

As he spoke, he grasped the tall Hungarian round the

waist, and, unmatched in wrestling as in other military exercises, hurled him backwards with such violence that the mass flew, as if discharged from a military engine, not only through the ring of spectators who witnessed the extraordinary scene, but over the edge of the mount itself, 5 down the steep side of which Wallenrode rolled headlong, until, pitching at length upon his shoulder, he dislocated the bone, and lay like one dead. This almost supernatural display of strength did not encourage either the duke or any of his followers to renew a personal contest ¹⁰ so inauspiciously commenced.

The various cries of the assailants, contradicting each other, showed their irresolution; while Richard, his foot still on the archducal banner, glared round him, with an eye that seemed to seek an enemy, and from which the ¹⁵ angry nobles shrank appalled, as from the threatened grasp of a lion. De Vaux and the Knight of the Leopard kept their places beside him; and though the swords which they held were still sheathed, it was plain that they were prompt to protect Richard's person to the very ²⁰ last, and their size and remarkable strength plainly showed the defence would be a desperate one.

Salisbury and his attendants were also now drawing near, with bills and partisans brandished, and bows already bended.

25

At this moment, King Philip of France, attended by one or two of his nobles, came on the platform to inquire the cause of the disturbance, and made gestures of surprise at finding the King of England raised from his sick-bed, and confronting their common ally the Duke of Austria, ³⁰ in such a menacing and insulting posture.

“What means this unseemly broil betwixt the sworn brethren of the Cross—the royal Majesty of England and the princely Duke Leopold? How is it possible

that those who are the chiefs and pillars of this holy expedition——”

“A truce with thy remonstrance, France,” said Richard, enraged inwardly at finding himself placed on a sort of equality with Leopold, yet not knowing how to resent it. “This duke, or prince, or pillar, if you will, hath been insolent, and I have chastised him—that is all. Here is a coil, forsooth, because of spurning a hound!”

“Majesty of France,” said the duke, “I appeal to you and every sovereign prince against the foul indignity which I have sustained. This King of England hath pulled down my banner, torn, and trampled on it.”

“Because he had the audacity to plant it beside mine,” said Richard.

“My rank as thine equal entitled me,” replied the duke, emboldened by the presence of Philip.

“Assert such equality for thy person,” said King Richard, “and, by St. George, I will treat thy person as I did thy broidered kerchief there, fit but for the meanest use to which kerchief may be put.”

“Nay, but patience, brother of England,” said Philip, “and I will presently show Austria that he is wrong in this matter. Do not think, noble duke,” he continued, “that, in permitting the standard of England to occupy the highest point in our camp, we, the independent sovereigns of the Crusade, acknowledge any inferiority to the royal Richard. It were inconsistent to think so; since even the Oriflamme itself—the great banner of France, to which the royal Richard himself, in respect of his French possessions, is but a vassal—holds for the present an inferior place to the Lions of England. But as sworn brethren of the Cross, military pilgrims, who, laying aside the pomp and pride of this world, are hewing with our swords the way to the Holy Sepulchre, I myself,

and the other princes, have renounced to King Richard, from respect to his high renown and great feats of arms, that precedence which elsewhere, and upon other motives, would not have been yielded. I am satisfied that when your royal grace of Austria shall have considered this, you 5 will express sorrow for having placed your banner on this spot, and that the royal Majesty of England will then give satisfaction for the insult he has offered."

The duke answered sullenly that he would refer his quarrel to the General Council of the Crusade—a motion 10 which Philip highly applauded, as qualified to take away a scandal most harmful to Christendom.

Richard, retaining the same careless attitude, listened to Philip until his oratory seemed exhausted, and then said aloud—

“ I am drowsy—this fever hangs about me still. Brother of France, thou art acquainted with my humour, and that I have at all times but few words to spare; know, therefore, at once, I will submit a matter touching the honour of England neither to prince, pope, nor council. 20 Here stands my banner; whatsoever pennon shall be reared within three butts’ length of it—ay, were it the Oriflamme, of which you were, I think, but now speaking —shall be treated as that dishonoured rag; nor will I yield other satisfaction than that which these poor limbs can 25 render in the lists to any bold challenge—ay, were it against five champions instead of one.”

Philip answered calmly to the almost injurious defiance of Richard—

“ I came not hither to awaken fresh quarrels, contrary 30 to the oath we have sworn, and the holy cause in which we have engaged. I part from my brother of England as brothers should part, and the only strife between the Lions of England and the Lilies of France shall be,

which shall be carried deepest into the ranks of the infidels."

"It is a bargain, my royal brother," said Richard, stretching out his hand with all the frankness which belonged to his rash but generous disposition; "and soon may we have the opportunity to try this gallant and fraternal wager. I must not leave this banner unguarded in darkness," continued Richard; "by daylight the look of the Lions will alone defend it. Here, Thomas of Gilsland, I give thee the charge of the standard—watch over the honour of England."

"Her safety is yet more dear to me," said De Vaux, "and the life of Richard is the safety of England. I must have your Highness back to your tent, and that without further tarriance."

"Thou art a rough and peremptory nurse, De Vaux," said the king, smiling; and then added, addressing Sir Kenneth, "Valiant Scot, I owe thee a boon, and I will pay it richly. There stands the banner of England! Watch it as a novice does his armour on the night before he is dubbed. Stir not from it three spears' length, and defend it with thy body against injury or insult. Sound thy bugle, if thou art assailed by more than three at once. Dost thou undertake the charge?"

"Willingly," said Kenneth; "and will discharge it upon penalty of my head. I will but arm me, and return hither instantly."

CHAPTER XI.

IT was midnight, and the moon rode clear and high in heaven, when Kenneth of Scotland stood upon his watch on St. George's Mount, beside the banner of England, a solitary sentinel, to protect the emblem of that nation against the insults which might be meditated among the 5 thousands whom Richard's pride had made his enemies. High thoughts rolled, one after another, upon the mind of the warrior. It seemed to him as if he had gained some favour in the eyes of the chivalrous monarch, who till now had not seemed to distinguish him among the 10 crowds of brave men whom his renown had assembled under his banner, and Sir Kenneth little recked that the display of royal regard consisted in placing him upon a post so perilous.

Sir Kenneth had full leisure to enjoy these and similar 15 high-souled thoughts. All nature around him slept in calm moonshine or in deep shadow. The long rows of tents and pavilions, glimmering or darkening as they lay in the moonlight or in the shade, were still and silent as the streets of a deserted city. Beside the banner-staff lay 20 the large stag-hound already mentioned, the sole companion of Kenneth's watch, on whose vigilance he trusted for early warning of the approach of any hostile footstep. The noble animal seemed to understand the purpose of their watch, for he looked from time to time at the rich 25 folds of the heavy pennon, and, when the cry of the sentinels came from the distant lines and defences of the camp, he answered them with one deep and reiterated bark, as if to affirm that he too was vigilant in his duty.

Thus passed two hours of the knight's watch, without 30

anything remarkable occurring. At length, and upon a sudden, the gallant stag-hound bayed furiously, and seemed about to dash forward where the shadow lay the darkest, yet waited, as if in the slips, till he should know 5 the pleasure of his master.

“Who goes there?” said Sir Kenneth, aware that there was something creeping forward on the shadowy side of the mount.

“In the name of Merlin and Maugis,” answered a 10 hoarse, disagreeable voice, “tie up your four-footed demon there, or I come not at you.”

“And who art thou that would approach my post?” said Sir Kenneth, bending his eyes as keenly as he could on some object which he could just observe at the bottom 15 of the ascent, without being able to distinguish its form.

“Beware—I am here for death and life.”

“Take up thy long-fanged Sathanas,” said the voice, “or I will conjure him with a bolt from my arblast.”

At the same time was heard the sound of a spring or 20 check, as when a crossbow is bent.

“Unbend thy arblast, and come into the moonlight,” said the Scot, “or, by St. Andrew, I will pin thee to the earth, be what or whom thou wilt!”

As he spoke, he poised his long lance by the middle, and, 25 fixing his eye upon the object, which seemed to move, he brandished the weapon, as if meditating to cast it from his hand. But Sir Kenneth was ashamed of his purpose, and grounded his weapon, when there stepped from the shadow into the moonlight, like an actor entering upon the stage, 30 a stunted, decrepit creature, whom, by his fantastic dress and deformity, he recognised, even at some distance, for the male of the two dwarfs whom he had seen in the chapel at Engaddi.

The little distorted miniature of humanity, assured of

his safety from an enemy so formidable, came panting up the ascent, which the shortness of his legs rendered laborious, and, when he arrived on the platform at the top, shifted to his left hand the little crossbow, which was just such a toy as children at that period were permitted to 5 shoot small birds with, and, assuming an attitude of great dignity, gracefully extended his right hand to Sir Kenneth, in an attitude as if he expected he would salute it. But such a result not following, he demanded, in a sharp and angry tone of voice, “ Soldier, wherefore renderest thou not 10 to Nectabanus the homage due to his dignity ? Or is it possible that thou canst have forgotten him ? ”

“ Great Nectabanus,” answered the knight, willing to soothe the creature’s humour, “ that were difficult for any-one who has ever looked upon thee. Pardon me, however, 15 that, being a soldier upon my post, with my lance in my hand, I may not give to one of thy puissance the advantage of coming within my guard, or of mastering my weapon. Suffice it, that I reverence thy dignity, and submit myself to thee as humbly as a man-at-arms in my place may.” 20

“ It shall suffice,” said Nectabanus, “ so that you presently attend me to the presence of those who have sent me hither to summon you.”

“ Great sir,” replied the knight, “ neither in this can I gratify thee, for my orders are to abide by this banner 25 till daybreak ; so I pray you to hold me excused in that matter also.”

So saying, he resumed his walk upon the platform. But the dwarf did not suffer him so easily to escape from his importunity. 30

“ Look you,” he said, placing himself before Sir Kenneth, so as to interrupt his way, “ either obey me, sir knight, as in duty bound, or I will lay the command upon thee, in the name of one whose beauty could call

down the genii from their sphere, and whose grandeur could command the immortal race when they had descended."

A wild and improbable conjecture arose in the knight's mind, but he repelled it. It was impossible, he thought, that the lady of his love should have sent him such a message by such a messenger; yet his voice trembled as he said, "Go to, Nectabanus. Tell me at once, and as a true man, whether this sublime lady, of whom thou speakest, be other than the houri with whose assistance I beheld thee sweeping the chapel at Engaddi?"

"How! presumptuous knight," replied the dwarf, "think'st thou the mistress of our own royal affections, the sharer of our greatness, and the partner of our coming, would demean herself by laying charge on such a vassal as thou? But look thou here, and as thou knowest or disownest this token, so obey or refuse her commands who hath deigned to impose them on thee."

So saying, he placed in the knight's hands a ruby ring, which, even in the moonlight, he had no difficulty to recognise as that which usually graced the finger of the high-born lady to whose service he had devoted himself. Could he have doubted the truth of the token, he would have been convinced by the small knot of carnation-coloured ribbon which was fastened to the ring. This was his lady's favourite colour, and more than once had he himself, assuming it for that of his own liveries, caused the carnation to triumph over all other hues in the lists and in the battle.

Sir Kenneth was struck nearly mute by seeing such a token in such hands.

"In the name of all that is sacred, from whom didst thou receive this witness?" said the knight.

"Fond and foolish knight," said the dwarf, we list

not to parley with thee further than to command thee, in the name and by the power of that ring, to follow us to her who is the owner of the ring."

"Good Nectabanus, bethink thyself," said the knight. "Can my lady know where and upon what duty I am 5 this night engaged? Is she aware that my life—pshaw, why should I speak of life, but that my honour depends on my guarding this banner till daybreak—and can it be her wish that I should leave it even to pay homage to her? It is impossible; the princess is pleased to be 10 merry with her servant in sending him such a message; and I must think so the rather that she hath chosen such a messenger."

"Oh, keep your belief," said Nectabanus, turning round as if to leave the platform; "it is little to me whether you 15 be traitor or true man to this royal lady; so fare thee well."

"Stay, stay—I entreat you stay!" said Sir Kenneth. "Answer me but one question—Is the lady who sent thee near to this place?" 20

"What signifies it?" said the dwarf. "Ought fidelity to reckon furlongs, or miles, or leagues—like the poor courier, who is paid for his labour by the distance which he traverses? Nevertheless, thou soul of suspicion, I tell thee, the fair owner of the ring, now sent to so unworthy 25 a vassal, in whom there is neither truth nor courage, is not more distant from this place than this arblast can send a bolt."

The knight gazed again on the ring, as if to ascertain that there was no possible falsehood in the token. 30

"Tell me," he said to the dwarf, "is my presence required for any length of time?"

"Time!" answered Nectabanus, in his flighty manner. "Know'st thou not a true knight's time should only be

reckoned by the deeds that he performs in behalf of God and his lady?"

"The words of truth, though in the mouth of folly," said the knight. "And doth my lady really summon me to some deed of action, in her name and for her sake? And may it not be postponed for even the few hours till daybreak?"

"She requires thy presence instantly," said the dwarf, "and without the loss of so much time as would be told by ten grains of the sand-glass. Hearken, thou cold-blooded and suspicious knight, these are her very words—'Tell him, that the hand which dropped roses can bestow laurels.'"

This allusion to their meeting in the chapel of Engaddi sent a thousand recollections through Sir Kenneth's brain, and convinced him that the message delivered by the dwarf was genuine. The dwarf, in the mean time, augmented his confusion by insisting that he must either return the ring or instantly attend him.

"Hold, hold, yet a moment hold," said the knight, and proceeded to mutter to himself, "Am I either the subject or slave of King Richard, more than as a free knight sworn to the service of the Crusade?"

"The ring, the ring!" exclaimed the dwarf, impatiently. "False and slothful knight, return the ring, which thou art unworthy to touch or to look upon."

"A moment, a moment, good Nectabanus," said Sir Kenneth. "Disturb not my thoughts. And yet, Cœur de Lion's behest—my own promise! Nectabanus, I conjure thee once more to say, are you to conduct me far from hence?"

"But to yonder pavilion; and, since you must needs know," replied Nectabanus, "the moon is glimmering on the gilded ball which crowns its roof, and which is worth a king's ransom."

“ I can return in an instant,” said the knight, shutting his eyes desperately to all further consequences. “ I can hear from thence the bay of my dog, if any one approaches the standard; I will throw myself at my lady’s feet, and pray her leave to return to conclude 5 my watch. Here, Roswal” (calling his hound, and throwing down his mantle by the side of the standard-spear), “ watch thou here, and let no one approach.”

The majestic dog looked in his master’s face, as if to be sure that he understood his charge, then sat down 10 beside the mantle, with ears erect and head raised, like a sentinel, understanding perfectly the purpose for which he was stationed there.

“ Come now, good Nectabanus,” said the knight, “ let us hasten to obey the commands thou hast brought.” 15

Turning amongst the labyrinth of tents, the dwarf led the knight in silence to the opposite side of the pavilion, which thus screened them from the observation of the warders, who seemed either too negligent or too sleepy to discharge their duty with much accuracy. 20 Arrived here, the dwarf raised the under part of the canvas from the ground, and made signs to Sir Kenneth that he should introduce himself to the inside of the tent, by creeping under it. The knight hesitated: there seemed an indecorum in thus privately introducing 25 himself into a pavilion, pitched, doubtless, for the accommodation of noble ladies; but he recalled to remembrance the assured tokens which the dwarf had exhibited, and concluded that it was not for him to dispute his lady’s pleasure.

He stooped accordingly, crept beneath the canvas inclosure of the tent, and heard the dwarf whisper from without—

“ Remain there until I call thee.”

CHAPTER XII.

SIR KENNETH was left for some minutes alone, and in darkness. Meanwhile, his situation was unpleasant. There was no light to show him into what sort of apartment he had been led; the Lady Edith was in immediate 5 attendance on the Queen of England, and the discovery of his having introduced himself thus furtively into the royal pavilion might, were it discovered, lead to much and dangerous suspicion. While he gave way to these unpleasant reflections, he heard a noise of female voices 15 laughing, whispering, and speaking, in an adjoining apartment, from which, as the sounds gave him reason to judge, he could only be separated by a canvas partition. It cannot be termed courtesy in Sir Kenneth, that, situated as he was, he overheard a conversation in which 15 he found himself deeply interested.

Struck to the heart with shame and resentment at what he had heard, Sir Kenneth was about to attempt his escape from the tent at all hazards, when what followed arrested his purpose.

20 "Nay, truly," said the first speaker, "our cousin Edith must first learn how this vaunted wight hath conducted himself, and we must reserve the power of giving her ocular proof that he hath failed in his duty. It may be a lesson will do good upon her. But here she comes."

25 A figure, as if entering the apartment, cast upon the partition a shade, which glided along slowly until it mixed with those which already clouded it. Despite of the bitter disappointment which he had experienced—despite the insult and injury with which it seemed he 30 had been visited by the malice or, at best, by the idle

humour of Queen Berengaria (for he already concluded that she who spoke loudest, and in a commanding tone, was the wife of Richard), the knight felt something so soothing to his feelings in learning that Edith had been no partner to the fraud practised on him, and so interesting to his curiosity in the scene which was about to take place, that, instead of prosecuting his more prudent purpose of an instant retreat, he looked anxiously, on the contrary, for some rent or crevice, by means of which he might be made eye- as well as ear-witness to what was to go forward.

It seemed, in the meanwhile, as if Edith were waiting for the commands of the queen, and as if the other were reluctant to speak, for fear of being unable to command her laughter, and that of her companions ; for Sir Kenneth could only distinguish a sound as of suppressed tittering and merriment.

“ Your Majesty,” said Edith at last, “ seems in a merry mood, though, methinks, the hour of night prompts a sleepy one. I was well disposed bedward, when I had your Majesty’s commands to attend you.”

“ I will not long delay you, cousin, from your repose,” said the queen ; “ though I fear you will sleep less soundly when I tell you your wager is lost.”

“ Nay, royal madam,” said Edith, “ this, surely, is dwelling on a jest which has rather been worn out. I laid no wager, however it was your Majesty’s pleasure to suppose, or to insist, that I did so.”

“ Nay, now, despite our pilgrimage, Satan is strong with you, my gentle cousin, and prompts thee to leasing. Can you deny that you gaged your ruby ring against my golden bracelet that yonder Knight of the Libbard, or how call you him, could not be seduced from his post ? ”

“ Your Majesty is too great for me to gainsay you,”

replied Edith; “ but these ladies can, if they will, bear me witness, that it was your Highness who proposed such a wager, and took the ring from my finger, even while I was declaring that I did not think it maidenly to gage 5 anything on such a subject.”

“ Nay, but, my Lady Edith,” said another voice, “ you must needs grant, under your favour, that you expressed yourself very confident of the valour of that same Knight of the Leopard.”

10 “ Forgive me,” said Berengaria, a thoughtless but good-humoured princess of the House of Navarre, “ but what is the great offence, after all? A young knight has been wiled hither—has stolen—or has *been* stolen—from his post, which no one will disturb in his absence, for the 15 sake of a fair lady; for, to do your champion justice, sweet one, the wisdom of Nectabanus could conjure him hither in no name but yours.”

“ Gracious Heaven! your Majesty does not say so?” said Edith, in a voice of alarm quite different from the 20 agitation she had previously evinced. “ You cannot say so, consistently with respect for your own honour, and for mine, your husband’s kinswoman! Say you were jesting with me, my royal mistress, and forgive me that I could, even for a moment, think it possible you could be in 25 earnest!”

“ You are angry, fair cousin, at losing your favourite ring,” said the queen. “ Come, since you grudge to pay your wager, we will renounce our right. It was your name and that pledge brought him hither, and we care 30 not for the bait after the fish is caught.”

“ Madam,” replied Edith, impatiently, “ you know well that your Grace could not wish for anything of mine but it becomes instantly yours. But I would give a bushel of rubies ere ring or name of mine had been used to bring

a brave man into a fault, and perhaps to disgrace and punishment."

"Oh, it is for the safety of our true knight that we fear?" said the queen. "You rate our power too low, fair cousin, when you speak of a life being lost for a 5 frolic of ours. Oh, Lady Edith, others have influence on the iron breasts of warriors as well as you—the heart even of a lion is made of flesh, not of stone; and, believe me, I have interest enough with Richard to save this knight, in whose fate Lady Edith is so deeply concerned, 10 from the penalty of disobeying his royal commands."

"For the love of the blessed Cross, most royal lady," said Edith—and Sir Kenneth, with feelings which it were hard to unravel, heard her prostrate herself at the queen's feet—"for the love of our blessed Lady, and of 15 every holy saint in the calendar, beware what you do! You know not King Richard—you have been but shortly wedded to him: your breath might as well combat the west wind when it is wildest, as your words persuade my royal kinsman to pardon a military offence. Oh! for 20 God's sake, dismiss this gentleman, if indeed you have lured him hither! I could almost be content to rest with the shame of having invited him, did I know that he was returned again where his duty calls him!"

"Arise, cousin, arise," said Queen Berengaria, "and 25 be assured all will be better than you think. I tell thee I will take the blame on myself with King Richard in behalf of thy fair Northern friend—thine acquaintance, I would say, since thou own'st him not as a friend. Nay, look not so reproachfully. We will send Nectabanus to 30 dismiss this Knight of the Standard to his post; and we ourselves will grace him on some future day, to make amends for his wild-goose chase. He is, I warrant, but lying perdu in some neighbouring tent."

“ By my crown of lilies, and my sceptre of a specially good water-reed,” said Nectabanus, “ your Majesty is mistaken: he is nearer at hand than you wot—he lieth ensconced there behind that canvas partition.”

5 “ And within hearing of each word we have said!” exclaimed the queen, in her turn violently surprised and agitated. “ Out, monster of folly and malignity!”

As she uttered these words, Nectabanus fled from the pavilion.

10 “ What can now be done?” said the queen to Edith, in a whisper of undisguised uneasiness.

“ That which must,” said Edith firmly. “ We must see this gentleman, and place ourselves in his mercy.”

15 So saying, she began hastily to undo a curtain, which at one place covered an entrance or communication.

“ For Heaven’s sake, forbear—consider,” said the queen, “ my apartment—our dress—the hour—my honour!”

20 But ere she could detail her remonstrances the curtain fell, and there was no division any longer betwixt the armed knight and the party of ladies.

While Sir Kenneth stood motionless on the same spot in which he was first discovered, Edith rather stepped towards than retired from him, as she exclaimed, “ Hasten to your post, valiant knight! You are deceived in being 25 trained hither. Ask no questions.”

“ I need ask none,” said the knight, sinking upon one knee.

“ Have you heard all?” said Edith impatiently. “ Gracious saints! then wherefore wait you here, when 30 each minute that passes is loaded with dishonour?”

“ I have heard that I am dishonoured, lady, and I have heard it from you,” answered Kenneth. “ What reck I how soon punishment follows? I have but one petition to you, and then I seek, among the sabres of

the infidels, whether dishonour may not be washed out with blood."

"Do not so, neither," said the lady. "Be wise: dally not here—all may yet be well, if you will but use despatch."

"I wait but for your forgiveness," said the knight, still kneeling, "for my presumption in believing that my poor services could have been required or valued by you."

"I do forgive you. Oh, I have nothing to forgive! I have been the means of injuring you. But oh, begone! ⁵ I will forgive—I will value you—that is, as I value every brave Crusader—if you will but begone!"

"Receive, first, this precious, yet fatal pledge," said the knight, tendering the ring to Edith, who now showed gestures of impatience.

"Oh no, no," she said, declining to receive it. "Keep it—keep it as a mark of my regard—my regret, I would say. Oh, begone, if not for your own sake, for mine!" ¹⁵

Almost recompensed for the loss even of honour, which her voice had denounced to him, by the interest ²⁰ which she seemed to testify in his safety, Sir Kenneth rose from his knee, and, casting a momentary glance on Edith, bowed low and seemed about to withdraw. At the same instant, that maidenly bashfulness which the energy of Edith's feelings had till then triumphed over ²⁵ became conqueror in its turn, and she hastened from the apartment, extinguishing her lamp as she went, and leaving, in Sir Kenneth's thoughts, both mental and natural gloom behind her.

She must be obeyed, was the first distinct idea ³⁰ which waked him from his reverie, and he hastened to the place by which he had entered the pavilion. To pass under the canvas in the manner he had entered required time and attention, and he made a readier

aperture by slitting the canvas wall with his poniard. When in the free air, he felt rather stupefied and over-powered by a conflict of sensations, than able to ascertain what was the real import of the whole.

5 But at once sounds came upon his ear which instantly recalled him to the full energy of his faculties. These proceeded from the Mount of St. George. He heard first a single fierce, angry, and savage bark, which was immediately followed by a yell of agony. No deer ever bounded 10 with a wilder start at the voice of Roswal than did Sir Kenneth at what he feared was the death-cry of that noble hound, from whom no ordinary injury could have extracted even the slightest acknowledgment of pain. He surmounted the space which divided him from the avenue, 15 and, having attained it, began to run towards the mount, although loaded with his mail, faster than most men could have accompanied him even if unarmed, relaxed not his pace for the steep sides of the artificial mound, and in a few minutes stood on the platform upon its summit.

20 The moon broke forth at this moment, and showed him that the standard of England was vanished, that the spear on which it had floated lay broken on the ground, and beside it was his faithful hound, apparently in the agonies of death.

25 [The stain on Sir Kenneth's character as a knight which has arisen from his desertion of the post assigned to him by King Richard, fills the Scot with grief and shame, and he begins to lament aloud. At this moment the Arab physician appears, and inquires about the cause of his distress. After 30 attending to the wounded dog, the physician urges the knight to flee from Richard's anger and to take refuge with Saladin. Sir Kenneth rejects the advice. When the Hakim informs the knight that there is a proposal to bring about peace between

the Christians and the Mohammedans by a marriage between Saladin and Edith Plantagenet, Sir Kenneth is greatly annoyed, and again refuses to flee. The physician then departs with the wounded dog, and the disgraced knight resolves to make his way to the king's pavilion.]

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CHAPTER XIII.

ON the evening on which Sir Kenneth assumed his post, Richard, after the stormy event which disturbed its tranquillity, had retired to rest in the plenitude of confidence inspired by his unbounded courage, and the superiority which he had displayed in carrying the point he aimed at 10 in presence of the whole Christian host and its leaders.

Another monarch would have doubled his guards on the evening after such a scene, and kept at least a part of his troops under arms. But Cœur de Lion dismissed, upon the occasion, even his ordinary watch, and assigned to his 15 soldiers a donative of wine to celebrate his recovery.

The physician attended the king from his retiring to bed till midnight was past, and twice administered medicine to him during that period, always previously observing the quarter of heaven occupied by the full moon, whose 20 influences he declared to be most sovereign, or most baleful, to the effect of his drugs.

It was about the hour of sunrise, when a slow, armed tread was heard approaching the king's pavilion; and ere De Vaux, who slumbered beside his master's bed as lightly 25 as ever sleep sat upon the eyes of a watch-dog, had time to do more than arise and say, "Who comes?" the Knight of the Leopard entered the tent, with a deep and devoted gloom seated upon his manly features.

“ Whence this bold intrusion, sir knight ? ” said De Vaux sternly, yet in a tone which respected his master’s slumbers.

“ Hold ! De Vaux,” said Richard, awaking on the 5 instant. “ Sir Kenneth cometh like a good soldier to render an account of his guard ; to such the general’s tent is ever accessible.” Then, rising from his slumbering posture and leaning on his elbow, he fixed his large, bright eye upon the warrior. “ Speak, sir Scot ; thou comest to 10 tell me of a vigilant, safe, and honourable watch, dost thou not ? The rustling of the folds of the Banner of England were enough to guard it, even without the body of such a knight as men hold thee.”

“ As men will hold me no more,” said Sir Kenneth, 15 “ My watch hath neither been vigilant, safe, nor honourable. The Banner of England has been carried off.”

“ And thou alive to tell it ? ” said Richard, in a tone of derisive incredulity. “ Away, it cannot be. There is not even a scratch on thy face. Why dost thou stand thus 20 mute ? Speak the truth ; it is ill jesting with a king, yet I will forgive thee if thou hast lied.”

“ Lied ! Sir King ! ” returned the unfortunate knight, with fierce emphasis, and one glance of fire from his eye, bright and transient as the flash from the cold and stony 25 flint. “ But this also must be endured. I have spoken the truth.”

“ By God, and by St. George ! ” said the king, bursting into fury, which, however, he instantly checked. “ De Vaux, go view the spot ! This fever has disturbed his 30 brain. This cannot be. The man’s courage is proof. It *cannot* be ! Go speedily ; or send, if thou wilt not go.”

The king was interrupted by Sir Henry Neville, who came, breathless, to say that the banner was gone, and the knight who guarded it overpowered, and most probably

murdered, as there was a pool of blood where the banner-spear lay shivered.

“But whom do I see here?” said Neville, his eyes suddenly resting upon Sir Kenneth.

“A traitor,” said the king, starting to his feet, and seizing the curtal-axe which was ever near his bed, “a traitor! whom thou shalt see die a traitor’s death.” And he drew back the weapon as in act to strike.

Colourless, but firm as a marble statue, the Scot stood before him, with his bare head uncovered by any protection, to his eyes cast down to the earth, his lips scarcely moving, yet muttering probably in prayer.

The king stood for an instant prompt to strike, then, sinking the head of the weapon towards the ground, he exclaimed—

“But there was blood, Neville, there was blood upon the place. Hark thee, sir Scot—brave thou wert once, for I have seen thee fight. Say thou hast slain two of the thieves in defence of the standard—say but one; say thou hast struck but a good blow in our behalf, and get thee ¹⁵ 20 out of the camp with thy life and thy infamy!”

“You have called me a liar, my lord king,” replied Kenneth firmly; “and therein, at least, you have done me wrong. Know, that there was no blood shed in defence of the standard save that of a poor hound, which, more ²⁵ faithful than his master, defended the charge which he deserted.”

“Now, by St. George!” said Richard, again heaving up his arm.

But De Vaux threw himself between the king and the ³⁰ object of his vengeance, and spoke with the blunt truth of his character—

“My liege, this must not be—here, nor by your own hand. It is enough of folly for one night and day to have

intrusted your banner to a Scot. Said I not they were ever fair and false?"

"Thou didst, De Vaux; thou wast right, and I confess it" said Richard. "I should have known him better—
5 I should have remembered how the fox William deceived me touching this Crusade."

"My lord," said Sir Kenneth, "William of Scotland never deceived; but circumstances prevented his bringing his forces."

10 "Peace, shameless!" said the king. "Thou sulliest the name of a prince even by speaking it. And yet, De Vaux, it is strange," he added, "to see the bearing of the man. Coward or traitor he must be, yet he abode the blow of Richard Plantagenet, as our arm had been
15 raised to lay knighthood on his shoulder. Had he shown the slightest sign of fear—had but a joint trembled, or an eyelid quivered, I had shattered his head like a crystal goblet. But I cannot strike where there is neither fear nor resistance."

20 "There is treason around you, King of England," continued Sir Kenneth.

"It may well be as thou say'st," replied Richard. "I have a pregnant example."

"Treason that will injure thee more deeply than the
25 loss of a hundred banners in a pitched field. The—the"—Sir Kenneth hesitated, and at length continued in a lower tone—"the Lady Edith——"

30 "Ha!" said the king, drawing himself suddenly into a state of haughty attention, and fixing his eye firmly on the supposed criminal. "What of her? what of her? what has she to do with this matter?"

"My lord," said the Scot, "there is a scheme on foot to disgrace your royal lineage, by bestowing the hand of the Lady Edith on the Saracen soldan, and thereby to

purchase a peace most dishonourable to Christendom by an alliance most shameful to England."

This communication had precisely the contrary effect from that which Sir Kenneth expected.

"Name her not—and for an instant think not of her!" 5 said the king, again straining the curtal-axe in his gripe, until the muscles started above his brawny arm like cordage formed by the ivy around the limb of an oak.

"Not name—not think of her!" answered Sir Kenneth, his spirits, stunned as they were by self-depression, beginning to recover their elasticity from this species of controversy. "Now, by the Cross, on which I place my hope, her name shall be the last word in my mouth, her image the last thought in my mind! Try thy boasted strength on this bare brow, and see if thou canst prevent my purpose." 15

"He will drive me mad!" said Richard, who, in his despite, was once more staggered in his purpose by the dauntless determination of the criminal.

Ere Thomas of Gilsland could reply, some bustle was heard without, and the arrival of the queen was announced 20 from the outer part of the pavilion.

"Detain her—detain her, Neville!" cried the king. "This is no sight for women. Fie, that I have suffered such a paltry traitor to chafe me thus! Away with him, De Vaux," he whispered. 25

De Vaux made haste to remove Sir Kenneth by a private issue to a separate tent, where he was disarmed and put in fetters for security. De Vaux looked on with a steady and melancholy attention, while the provost's officers, to whom Sir Kenneth was now committed, took 30 these severe precautions.

When they were ended, he said solemnly to the unhappy criminal, "It is King Richard's pleasure that you die undegraded, without mutilation of your body, or shame

to your arms, and that your head be severed from the trunk by the sword of the executioner."

"It is kind," said the knight in a low and rather submissive tone of voice, as one who received an unexpected favour; "my family will not then hear the worst of the tale. Oh, my father—my father!"

This muttered invocation did not escape the blunt but kindly-natured Englishman, and he brushed the back of his large hand over his rough features ere he could proceed.

"It is Richard of England's further pleasure," he said at length, "that you have speech with a holy man, and I have met on the passage hither with a Carmelite friar who may fit you for your passage. He waits without, until you are in a frame of mind to receive him."

"Let it be instantly," said the knight. "In this also Richard is kind. I cannot be more fit to see the good father at any time than now; for life and I have taken farewell, as two travellers who have arrived at the cross-way where their roads separate."

"It is well," said De Vaux slowly and solemnly; "for it irks me somewhat to say that which sums my message. It is King Richard's pleasure that you prepare for instant death."

"God's pleasure and the king's be done," replied the knight patiently. "I neither contest the justice of the sentence nor desire delay of the execution."

De Vaux began to leave the tent, but very slowly; paused at the door, and looked back at the Scot, from whose aspect thoughts of the world seemed banished, as if he was composing himself into deep devotion. The feelings of the stout English baron were in general none of the most acute, and yet, on the present occasion, his sympathy overpowered him in an unusual manner. He

came hastily back to the bundle of reeds on which the captive lay, took one of his fettered hands, and said, with as much softness as his rough voice was capable of expressing—

“Sir Kenneth, thou art yet young—thou hast a father. 5
My Ralph, whom I left training his little Galloway nag on the banks of the Irthing, may one day attain thy years—and, but for last night, I would to God I saw his youth bear such promise as thine! Can nothing be said or done in thy behalf?” 10

“Nothing,” was the melancholy answer. “I have deserted my charge—the banner intrusted to me is lost. When the headsman and block are prepared, the head and trunk are ready to part company.”

“Nay, then, God have mercy!” said De Vaux; “yet 15
would I rather than my best horse I had taken that watch myself. There is mystery in it, young man, as a plain man may descry, though he cannot see through it. Cowardice? Pshaw! No coward ever fought as I have seen thee do. Treachery? I cannot think traitors die in 20
their treason so calmly. Thou hast been trained from thy post by some deep guile—some well-devised stratagem—the cry of some distressed maiden has caught thine ear, or the laughful look of some merry one has taken thine eye. Never blush for it, we have all been led aside by 25
such gear. Come, I pray thee, make a clear conscience of it to me, instead of the priest. Richard is merciful when his mood is abated. Hast thou nothing to intrust to me?”

The unfortunate knight turned his face from the kind warrior, and answered, “NOTHING.” 30

[The story here goes back a few hours to relate what took place in Queen Berengaria’s tent after the knight left. A messenger arrived in the morning, and informed Edith that the

standard was missing, and that the knight had vanished. Edith at once begged the queen to go to the king's tent and plead for Sir Kenneth. At first the queen made light of the matter, but Edith was so urgent that Berengaria consented to 5 go. Making a hasty toilet, the queen, accompanied by Edith and her ladies-in-waiting, set out to see the king.]

CHAPTER XIV.

THE entrance of Queen Berengaria into the interior of Richard's pavilion was withstood, in the most respectful and reverential manner indeed, but still withstood, by 10 the chamberlains who watched in the outer tent. She could hear the stern command of the king from within, prohibiting their entrance.

“ You see,” said the queen, appealing to Edith, as if she had exhausted all means of intercession in her power. 15 “ I knew it—the king will not receive us.”

At the same time they heard Richard speak to someone within, “ Go, speed thine office quickly, sirrah, for in that consists thy mercy ; ten bezants if thou deal’st on him at one blow. And hark thee, villain, observe if his 20 cheek loses colour or his eye falters ; mark me the smallest twitch of the features or wink of the eyelid. I love to know how brave souls meet death.”

“ If he sees my blade waved aloft without shrinking, he is the first ever did so,” answered a harsh, deep voice, 25 which a sense of unusual awe had softened into a sound much lower than its usual coarse tones.

Edith could remain silent no longer. “ If your Grace,” she said to the queen, “ make not your own way, I make

it for you ; or if not for your Majesty, for myself, at least. Chamberlains, the queen demands to see King Richard—the wife to speak with her husband."

"Noble lady," said the officer, lowering his wand of office, "it grieves me to gainsay you ; but His Majesty is 5 busied on matters of life and death."

"And we seek also to speak with him on matters of life and death," said Edith. "I will make entrance for your Grace." And putting aside the chamberlain with one hand, she laid hold on the curtain with the other. 10

"I dare not gainsay Her Majesty's pleasure," said the chamberlain, yielding to the vehemence of the fair petitioner ; and, as he gave way, the queen found herself obliged to enter the apartment of Richard.

The monarch was lying on his couch, and at some 15 distance, as awaiting his further commands, stood a man whose profession it was not difficult to conjecture. He was clothed in a jerkin of red cloth, which reached scantily below the shoulders, leaving the arms bare from about halfway above the elbow, and as an upper garment he 20 wore, when about as at present to betake himself to his dreadful office, a coat or tabard without sleeves, something like that of a herald, made of dressed bull's hide, and stained in the front with many a broad spot and speckle of dull crimson. A cap of rough shag served to hide the 25 upper part of his visage. What features were seen were stern and misanthropical. The man's figure was short, strongly made, with a neck like a bull, very broad shoulders, arms of great and disproportioned length, a huge square trunk, and thick bandy legs. This truculent 30 official leaned on a sword, the blade of which was nearly four feet and a half in length.

On the sudden entrance of the ladies, Richard, who was then lying on his couch, with his face towards the

entrance, and resting on his elbow as he spoke to his grisly attendant, flung himself hastily, as if displeased and surprised, to the other side, turning his back to the queen and the females of her train, and drawing around 5 him the covering of his couch.

Berengaria, after a hurried glance of undisguised and unaffected terror at the ghastly companion of her husband's secret counsels, rushed at once to the side of Richard's couch, dropped on her knees, flung her mantle from her 10 shoulder, showing, as they hung down at their full length, her beautiful golden tresses, seized upon the right hand of the king, and gradually pulling it to her with a force which was resisted, though but faintly, she possessed herself of that arm, the prop of Christendom and the dread 15 of Heathenesse, and, imprisoning its strength in both her little fairy hands, she bent upon it her brow and united to it her lips.

“What needs this, Berengaria ?” said Richard, his head still averted, but his hand remaining under her control.

20 “Send away that man—his look kills me !” muttered Berengaria.

“Begone, sirrah,” said Richard, still without looking round. “What wait’st thou for ? Art thou fit to look on these ladies ?”

25 “Your Highness’s pleasure touching the head,” said the man.

“Out with thee, dog !” answered Richard. “A Christian burial.”

The man disappeared, after casting a look upon the 30 beautiful queen, in her deranged dress and natural loveliness.

“And now, foolish wench, what wishest thou ?” said Richard, turning slowly and half reluctantly round to his royal suppliant.

But it was not in nature for any one, far less an admirer of beauty like Richard, to whom it stood only in the second rank to glory, to look without emotion on the countenance and the tremor of a creature so beautiful as Berengaria, or to feel, without sympathy, that her lips, 5 her brow, were on his hand, and that it was wetted by her tears. By degrees, he turned on her his manly countenance, with the softest expression of which his large blue eye, which so often gleamed with insufferable light, was capable. Caressing her fair head, and mingling his large 10 fingers in her beautiful and dishevelled locks, he raised and tenderly kissed the cherub countenance which seemed desirous to hide itself in his hand.

“And, once more, what seeks the lady of my heart in her knight’s pavilion, at this early and unwonted 15 hour?”

“Pardon, my most gracious liege, pardon!” said the queen, whose fears began again to unfit her for the duty of intercessor.

“Pardon! for what?” asked the king. 20

“First, for entering your royal presence too boldly and unadvisedly——”

She stopped.

“*Thou* too boldly! The sun might as well ask pardon because his rays entered the windows of some wretch’s 25 dungeon. But I was busied with work unfit for thee to witness, my gentle one, and I was unwilling, besides, that thou shouldst risk thy precious health where sickness has been so lately rife.”

“But thou art now well?” said the queen, still delaying the communication which she feared to make. 30

“Well enough to break a lance on the bold crest of that champion who shall refuse to acknowledge thee the fairest dame in Christendom.”

“Thou wilt not then refuse me one boon¹—only one—only a poor life?”

“Ha! proceed,” said King Richard, bending his brows.

5 “This unhappy Scottish knight,” murmured the queen.

“Speak not of him, madam!” exclaimed Richard sternly. “He dies—his doom is fixed.”

“Nay, my royal liege and love, ‘tis but a silken banner neglected; Berengaria will give thee another broidered 10 with her own hand, and rich as ever dallied with the wind. Every pearl I have shall go to bedeck it, and with every pearl I will drop a tear of thankfulness to my generous knight!”

“Thou know’st not what thou say’st,” said the king, 15 interrupting her in anger. “Pearls! Can all the pearls of the East atone for a speck upon England’s honour—all the tears that ever woman’s eye wept wash away a stain on Richard’s fame? Go to, madam, know your place, and your time, and your sphere. At present we have duties 20 in which you cannot be our partner.”

“Thou hear’st, Edith,” whispered the queen, “we shall but incense him.”

“Be it so,” said Edith, stepping forward. “My lord—I, your poor kinswoman, crave you for justice rather 25 than mercy; and to the cry of justice the ears of a monarch should be open at every time, place, and circumstance.”

“Ha! our cousin Edith?” said Richard, rising and sitting upright on the side of his couch, covered with his 30 long camiscia. “She speaks ever king-like, and king-like will I answer her, so she bring no request unworthy herself or me.”

“My lord,” she said, “this good knight, whose blood you are about to spill, hath done, in his time, service to

Christendom. He hath fallen from his duty through a snare set for him in mere folly and idleness of spirit. A message sent to him in the name of one who—why should I not speak it?—it was in my own—induced him for an instant to leave his post. And what knight in the Christian camp might not have thus far transgressed at command of a maiden who, poor howsoever in other qualities, hath yet the blood of Plantagenet in her veins? ”

“ And you saw him, then, cousin? ” replied the king, biting his lips to keep down his passion. 10

“ I did, my liege,” said Edith. “ It is no time to explain wherefore: I am here neither to exculpate myself nor to blame others.”

“ And where did you do him such a grace? ”

“ In the tent of Her Majesty the queen.” 15

“ Of our royal consort! ” said Richard. “ Now, by Heaven, by St. George of England, and every other saint that treads its crystal floor, this is too audacious! I have noticed and overlooked this warrior’s insolent admiration of one so far above him, and I grudged him not that one 20 of my blood should shed from her high-born sphere such influence as the sun bestows on the world beneath. But, heaven and earth! that you should have admitted him to an audience by night, in the very tent of our royal consort, and dare to offer this as an excuse for his disobedience 25 and desertion! By my father’s soul, Edith, thou shalt rue this thy life long in a monastery! ”

“ My liege,” said Edith, “ your greatness licenses tyranny. My honour, lord king, is as little touched as yours, and my lady the queen can prove it if she think 30 fit. But I have already said, I am not here to excuse myself or inculpate others. I ask you but to extend to one, whose fault was committed under strong temptation, that mercy which even you yourself, lord king, must one

day supplicate at a higher tribunal, and for faults, perhaps, less venial."

"Oh, peace, peace, for pity's sake," whispered the queen: "you do but offend him more!"

5 "I care not," said Edith; "the spotless virgin fears not the raging lion! Let him work his will on this worthy knight. Edith, for whom he dies, will know how to weep his memory: to me no one shall speak more of politic alliances, to be sanctioned with this poor hand.
10 I could not—I would not—have been his bride living—our degrees were too distant. But death unites the high and the low: I am henceforward the spouse of the grave."

The king was about to answer with much anger, when
15 a Carmelite monk entered the apartment hastily, his head and person muffled in the long mantle and hood of striped cloth of the coarsest texture which distinguished his order, and, flinging himself on his knees before the king, conjured him, by every holy word and sign, to stop the execution.

20 "My lord, there is a weighty secret—but it rests under the seal of confession—I dare not tell or even whisper it; but I swear to thee by my holy order, by the habit which I wear, by the blessed Elias, our founder, even him who was translated without suffering the ordinary pangs of mortality, that this youth hath divulged to me a secret which, if I might confide it to thee, would utterly turn thee from thy bloody purpose in regard to him."

25 "Good father," said Richard, "that I reverence the Church, let the arms which I now wear for her sake bear witness. Give me to know this secret, and I will do what shall seem fitting in the matter. But I am no blind Bayard, to take a leap in the dark under the stroke of a pair of priestly spurs."

“My lord,” said the holy man, throwing back his cowl and upper vesture, and discovering under the latter a garment of goat-skin, and from beneath the former a visage so wildly wasted by climate, fast, and penance as to resemble rather the apparition of an animated skeleton 5 than a human face, “for twenty years have I macerated this miserable body in the caverns of Engaddi, doing penance for a great crime. Think you I, who am dead to the world, would contrive a falsehood to endanger my own soul, or that one bound by the most sacred oaths to the 10 contrary, would betray the secrets of the confessional? Both are alike abhorrent to my very soul.”

“Away, away!” cried the king, stamping. “The sun has risen on the dishonour of England, and it is not yet avenged. Ladies and priest, withdraw, if ye would not 15 hear orders which would displease you; for, by St. George, I swear——”

“Swear NOT!” said the voice of one who had just then entered the pavilion.

“Ha! my learned Hakim,” said the king, “come, I 20 hope, to tax our generosity.”

“I come to request instant speech with you—instant—and touching matters of deep interest.”

“First look on my wife, Hakim, and let her know in 25 you the preserver of her husband.”

“It is not for me,” said the physician, folding his arms with an air of Oriental modesty and reverence, and bending his eyes on the ground, “it is not for me to look upon beauty unveiled and armed in its splendours.”

“Retire, then, Berengaria,” said the monarch; “and, 30 Edith, do you retire also. Nay, renew not your importunities! This I give to them, that the execution shall not be till high noon. Go, and be pacified. Dearest Berengaria, begone. Edith,” he added, with a glance

which struck terror even into the courageous soul of his kinswoman, “go, if you are wise.”

The females withdrew, or rather hurried from the tent, rank and ceremony forgotten, much like a flock of wild-fowl huddled together against whom the falcon has made a recent stoop.

The hermit also followed the ladies from the pavilion of the king.

CHAPTER XV.

“GREAT king,” said El Hakim, making his profound Oriental obeisance, “let thy servant speak one word, and yet live. I would remind thee that thou owest—not to me, their humble instrument—but to the Intelligences, whose benefits I dispense to mortals, a life——”

“And I warrant me thou wouldest have another in requital, ha ?” interrupted the king.

“Such is my humble prayer,” said the Hakim, “to the great Melech Ric—even the life of this good knight, who is doomed to die, and but for such fault as was committed by the Sultan Adam, surnamed Aboulbeschar, or the father of all men.”

“And thy wisdom might remind thee, Hakim, that Adam died for it,” said the king, somewhat sternly, and then began to pace the narrow space of his tent with some emotion, and to talk to himself. “Wife, kinswoman, hermit, Hakim, each appears in the lists as soon as the other is defeated ! Why, this is a single knight fighting against the whole *mélée* of the tournament—ha ! ha ! ha !” And Richard laughed aloud ; for he had, in fact, begun to

change his mood, his resentment being usually too violent to be of long endurance.

The physician meanwhile looked on him with a countenance of surprise, not unmixed with contempt; for the Eastern people make no allowance for those mercurial changes in the temper, and consider open laughter, upon almost any account, as derogatory to the dignity of man, and becoming only to women and children. At length the sage addressed the king, when he saw him more composed. 10

“A doom of death should not issue from laughing lips. Let thy servant hope that thou hast granted him this man’s life.”

“Take the freedom of a thousand captives instead,” said Richard; “restore so many of thy countrymen to 15 their tents and families, and I will give the warrant instantly. This man’s life can avail thee nothing, and it is forfeited.”

“All our lives are forfeited,” said the Hakim, putting his hand to his cap. “But the great Creditor is merciful, 20 and exacts not the pledge rigorously nor untimely.”

“Thou canst show me,” said Richard, “no special interest thou hast to become intercessor betwixt me and the execution of justice, to which I am sworn as a crowned king.” 25

“Thou art sworn to the dealing forth mercy as well as justice,” said El Hakim; “but what thou seekest, great king, is the execution of thine own will. And, for the concern I have in this request, know that many a man’s life depends upon thy granting this boon.” 30

“Explain thy words,” said Richard; “but think not to impose upon me by false pretexts.”

“Be it far from thy servant!” said Adonbec. “Know, then, that the medicine to which thou, sir king, and many

one beside, owe their recovery, is a talisman, composed under certain aspects of the heavens, when the Divine Intelligences are most propitious. I am but the poor administrator of its virtues. I dip it in a cup of water, 5 observe the fitting hour to administer it to the patient, and the potency of the draught works the cure."

"A most rare medicine," said the king, "and a commodious! and, as it may be carried in the leech's purse, would save the whole caravan of camels which they require to convey drugs and physic-stuff. I marvel there is any other in use."

"When thou caust show why a draught of cold water should have cured thee, when the most precious drugs failed," said the Hakim, "thou mayst reason on the other 15 mysteries attendant on this matter. For myself, I am inefficient to the great work, having this morning touched an unclean animal. Ask, therefore, no further questions; it is enough that, by sparing this man's life at my request, 20 you will deliver yourself, great king, and thy servant, from a great danger."

"Hark thee, Adonbec," replied the king, "I have no objection that leeches should wrap their words in mist, and pretend to derive knowledge from the stars; but when you bid Richard Plantagenet fear that a danger 25 will fall upon *him* from some idle omen, or omitted ceremonial, you speak to no ignorant Saxon, or doting old woman, who foregoes her purpose because a hare crosses the path, a raven croaks, or a cat sneezes."

"I cannot hinder your doubt of my words," said 30 Adonbec; "but yet, let my lord the king grant that truth is on the tongue of his servant. Will he think it just to deprive the world, and every wretch who may suffer by the pains which so lately reduced him to that couch of the benefit of this most virtuous talisman, rather

than extend his forgiveness to one poor criminal ? Be think you, lord king, that though thou canst slay thousands, thou canst not restore one man to health. Kings have the power of Satan to torment, sages that of Allah to heal ; beware how thou hinderest the good 5 to humanity which thou canst not thyself render. Thou canst cut off the head, but not cure the aching tooth."

" This is over insolent," said the king, hardening himself, as the Hakim assumed a more lofty and almost a commanding tone. " We took thee for our leech, not for 10 our counsellor or conscience-keeper."

" And is it thus the most renowned Prince of Frangistan repays benefit done to his royal person ? " said El Hakim, exchanging the humble and stooping posture in which he had hitherto solicited the king for an attitude 15 lofty and commanding. " Know, then," he said, " that through every court of Europe and Asia, to Moslem and Nazarene, to knight and lady, wherever harp is heard and sword worn, wherever honour is loved and infamy detested, to every quarter of the world will I denounce thee, Melech 20 Ric, as thankless and ungenerous ; and even the lands—if there be any such—that never heard of thy renown, shall yet be acquainted with thy shame ! "

" Are these terms to me, vile infidel ! " said Richard, striding up to him in fury. " Art weary of thy life ? " 25

" Strike ! " said El Hakim. " Thine own deed shall then paint thee more worthless than could my words, though each had a hornet's sting."

Richard turned fiercely from him, folded his arms, traversed the tent as before, and then exclaimed— 30

" Thankless and ungenerous ! As well be termed coward and infidel ! Hakim, thou hast chosen thy boon ; and though I had rather thou hadst asked my crown-jewels, yet I may not, king-like, refuse thee. Take this

Scot, therefore, to thy keeping: the provost will deliver him to thee on this warrant."

He hastily traced one or two lines, and gave them to the physician.

5 "Use him as thy bond-slave, to be disposed of as thou wilt: only, let him beware how he comes before the eyes of Richard."

"The bounty of the king hath filled my cup to the brim," said the sage: "yea, it hath been abundant as the fountain which sprang up amid the camp of the descendants of Israel, when the rock was stricken by the rod of Moussa ben Amran."

15 "Ay, but," said the king, smiling, "it required, as in the desert, a hard blow on the rock ere it yielded its treasures. I would that I knew something to pleasure thee which I might yield as freely as the natural fountain sends forth its waters."

"Let me touch that victorious hand," said the sage, "in token that, if Adonbec el Hakim should hereafter 20 demand a boon of Richard of England, he may do so, yet plead his command."

"Thou hast hand and glove upon it, man," replied Richard.

25 "May thy days be multiplied!" answered the Hakim, and withdrew from the apartment after the usual deep obeisance.

King Richard gazed after him as he departed, like one but half-satisfied with what had passed.

30 "Strange pertinacity," he said, "in this Hakim, and a wonderful chance to interfere between that audacious Scot and the chastisement he has merited so richly. Yet, let him live! there is one brave man the more in the world. And now for the Austrian. Ho, is the Baron of Gilsland there without?"

Sir Thomas de Vaux thus summoned, his bulky form speedily darkened the opening of the pavilion, while behind him glided as a spectre, unannounced, yet unopposed, the savage form of the hermit of Engaddi, wrapped in his goat-skin mantle.

Richard, without noticing his presence, called in a loud tone to the baron—

“Sir Thomas de Vaux, of Lanercost and Gilsland, take trumpet and herald, and go instantly to the tent of him whom they call Archduke of Austria, and see that it be 10 when the press of his knights and vassals is greatest around him, as is likely at this hour, for the German boar breakfasts ere he hears mass; enter his presence with as little reverence as thou mayst, and impeach him, on the part of Richard of England, that he hath this night, 15 by his own hand, or that of others, stolen from its staff the banner of England. Wherefore, say to him our pleasure, that within an hour from the time of my speaking he restore the said banner with all reverence, he himself and his principal barons waiting the whilst with heads un- 20 covered, and without their robes of honour; and that, moreover, he pitch beside it, on the one hand, his own banner of Austria reversed, as that which hath been dis- honoured by theft and felony, and, on the other, a lance bearing the bloody head of him who was his nearest 25 counsellor or assistant in this base injury. And say that, such our behests being punctually discharged, we will, for the sake of our vow and the weal of the Holy Land, forgive his other forfeits.”

“And how if the Duke of Austria deny all accession 30 to this act of wrong and of felony?” said Thomas de Vaux.

“Tell him,” replied the king, “we will prove it upon his body—ay, were he backed with his two bravest

champions. Knight-like will we prove it, of foot or on horse, in the desert or in the field, time, place, and arms, all at his own choice."

"Bethink you of the peace of God and the Church, my liege lord," said the Baron of Gilsland, "among those princes engaged in this holy Crusade."

"Bethink you how to execute my commands, my liege vassal," answered Richard, impatiently.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE Archbishop of Tyre was an emissary well chosen to communicate to Richard tidings which from another voice the lion-hearted king would not have brooked to hear without the most unbounded explosions of resentment. Even this sagacious and reverend prelate found difficulty in inducing him to listen to news which destroyed all his hopes of gaining back the Holy Sepulchre by force of arms, and acquiring the renown which the universal all-hail of Christendom was ready to confer upon him as the Champion of the Cross.

But by the archbishop's report it appeared that Saladin was assembling all the force of his hundred tribes, and that the monarchs of Europe, already disgusted from various motives with the expedition, which had proved so hazardous, and was daily growing more so, had resolved to abandon their purpose. In this they were countenanced by the example of Philip of France, who, with many protestations of regard, and assurances that he would first see his brother of England in safety, declared his intention to return to Europe. His great

vassal, the Earl of Champagne, had adopted the same resolution ; and it could not excite surprise that Leopold of Austria, affronted as he had been by Richard, was glad to embrace an opportunity of deserting a cause in which his haughty opponent was to be considered as 5 chief. Others announced the same purpose ; so that it was plain that the King of England was to be left, if he chose to remain, supported only by such volunteers as might, under such depressing circumstances, join themselves to the English army, and by the doubtful 10 aid of Conrade of Montserrat and the military orders of the Temple and of St. John.

It needed not many arguments to show Richard the truth of his situation ; and, indeed, after his first burst of passion, he sat him calmly down, and, with gloomy 15 looks, head depressed, and arms folded on his bosom, listened to the archbishop's reasoning on the impossibility of his carrying on the Crusade when deserted by his companions. Nay, he forebore interruption, even when the prelate ventured in measured terms to hint 20 that Richard's own impetuosity had been one main cause of disgusting the princes with the expedition.

“ *Confiteor*,” answered Richard, with a dejected look and something of a melancholy smile ; “ I confess, reverend father, that I ought on some accounts to sing 25 *culpa mea*. But is it not hard that my frailties of temper should be visited with such a penance—that, for a burst or two of natural passion, I should be doomed to see fade before me ungathered such a rich harvest of glory to God and honour to chivalry ? But it shall *not* fade. 30 By the soul of the Conqueror, I will plant the Cross on the towers of Jerusalem, or it shall be planted over Richard's grave ! ”

“ Thou mayest do it,” said the prelate, “ yet not

another drop of Christian blood be shed in the quarrel. There will be glory enough in having extorted from Saladin, by force of arms, and by the respect inspired by your fame, such conditions as at once restore the 5 Holy Sepulchre, open the Holy Land to pilgrims, secure their safety by strong fortresses, and, stronger than all, assure the safety of the Holy City by conferring on Richard the title of King Guardian of Jerusalem."

"How!" said Richard, his eyes sparkling with unusual light. "I—I—I the King Guardian of the Holy City! But Saladin still proposes to retain his interest in the Holy Land?"

"As a joint sovereign, the sworn ally," replied the prelate, "of the mighty Richard—his relative, if it may 15 be permitted, by marriage."

"By marriage!" said Richard, surprised, yet less so than the prelate had expected. "Ha! Ay, Edith Plantagenet. Did I dream this or did some one tell me? My head is still weak from this fever, and has 20 been agitated. Was it the Scot, or the Hakim, or yonder holy hermit, that hinted such a wild bargain?"

"The hermit of Engaddi, most likely," said the archbishop; "for he hath toiled much in this matter."

"My kinswoman to an infidel—ha!" exclaimed 25 Richard, as his eyes began to sparkle.

The prelate hastened to avert his wrath.

"The Pope's consent must doubtless be first attained, and the holy hermit, who is well known at Rome, will treat with the holy Father."

30 "How! without our consent first given?" said the king.

"Surely no," said the bishop in a quieting and insinuating tone of voice; "only with and under your especial sanction."

“ My sanction to marry my kinswoman to an infidel ? ” said Richard ; yet he spoke rather in a tone of doubt than as distinctly reprobating the measure proposed. “ But proceed : I will hear with patience.”

Equally delighted and surprised to find his task so 5 much easier than he had apprehended, the archbishop hastened to pour forth before Richard the instances of such alliances in Spain, not without countenance from the Holy See, the incalculable advantages which all Christendom would derive from the union of Richard 10 and Saladin, by a bond so sacred ; and, above all, he spoke with great vehemence and unction on the probability that Saladin would, in case of the proposed alliance, exchange his false faith for the true one.

“ Hath the soldan shown any disposition to become 15 Christian ? ” said Richard. “ If so, the king lives not on earth to whom I would grant the hand of a kinswoman, ay, or sister, sooner than to my noble Saladin—ay, though the one came to lay crown and sceptre at her feet, and the other had nothing to offer but his good sword and better 20 heart ! ”

“ Saladin hath heard our Christian teachers,” said the bishop somewhat evasively—“ my unworthy self, and others ; and as he listens with patience, and replies with calmness, it can hardly be but that he be snatched 25 as a brand from the burning. Moreover, the hermit of Engaddi, few of whose words have fallen fruitless to the ground, is possessed fully with the belief that there is a calling of the Saracens and the other heathen approaching, to which this marriage shall be matter of induction.” 30

“ I cannot tell,” Richard said, “ how it is with me ; but methinks these cold counsels of the princes of Christendom have infected me too with a lethargy of spirit. The time hath been that, had a layman proposed such alliance

to me, I had struck him to earth ; if a churchman, I had spit at him as a renegade and priest of Baal ; yet now this counsel sounds not so strange in mine ear. Only one attempt will I make to keep this gallant brotherhood together, if it be possible ; and if I fail, lord archbishop, we will speak together of thy counsel, which, as now, I neither accept nor altogether reject. Wend we to the Council, my lord : the hour calls us. Thou say'st Richard is hasty and proud : thou shalt see him humble himself to like the lowly broom-plant, from which he derives his surname."

With the assistance of those of his privy chamber, the king then hastily robed himself in a doublet and mantle of a dark and uniform colour ; and without any mark of regal dignity, excepting a ring of gold upon his head, he hastened with the Archbishop of Tyre to attend the Council, which waited but his presence to commence its sitting.

The pavilion of the Council was an ample tent, having before it the large banner of the Cross displayed, and another, on which was portrayed a female kneeling, with dishevelled hair and disordered dress, meant to represent the desolate and distressed Church of Jerusalem.

Here, therefore, the princes of the Crusade were assembled, awaiting Richard's arrival ; and even the brief delay which was thus interposed was turned to his disadvantage by his enemies, various instances being circulated of his pride and undue assumption of superiority, of which even the necessity of the present short pause was quoted as an instance.

They had settled, accordingly, that they should receive him on his entrance with slight notice, and no more respect than was exactly necessary to keep within the bounds of cold ceremonial. But when they beheld that noble form,

that princely countenance, somewhat pale from his late illness, the eye which had been called by minstrels the bright star of battle and victory—when his feats, almost surpassing human strength and valour, rushed on their recollection, the Council of Princes simultaneously arose 5—even the jealous King of France and the sullen and offended Duke of Austria arose with one consent, and the assembled princees burst forth with one voice in the acclamation, “God save King Richard of England! Long life to the valiant Lion’s heart!” 10

With a countenance frank and open as the summer sun when it rises, Richard distributed his thanks around, and congratulated himself on being once more among his royal brethren of the Crusades.

“Some brief words he desired to say,” such was his 15 address to the assembly, “though on a subject so unworthy as himself, even at the risk of delaying for a few minutes their consultations for the weal of Christendom, and the advancement of their holy enterprise.”

The assembled princes resumed their seats, and there 20 was a profound silence.

“This day,” continued the King of England, “is a high festival of the Church; and well becomes it Christian men, at such a tide, to reconcile themselves with their brethren, and confess their faults to each other. Noble 25 princes, and fathers of this holy expedition, Richard is a soldier; his hand is ever readier than his tongue, and his tongue is but too much used to the rough language of his trade. But do not, for Plantagenet’s hasty speeches and ill-considered actions, forsake the noble cause of the 30 redemption of Palestine: do not throw away earthly renown and eternal salvation, to be won here if ever they can be won by man, because the act of a soldier may have been hasty, and his speech as hard as the iron which he

has worn from childhood. Is Richard in default to any of you, Richard will make compensation both by word and action."

The rough eloquence and determined expression of the 5 military monarch at once roused the drooping spirits of the Crusaders, reanimated their devotion, and, fixing their attention on the principal object of the expedition, made most of them who were present blush for having been moved by such petty subjects of complaint as had before 10 engrossed them. Eye caught fire from eye, voice lent courage to voice. They resumed, as with one accord, the war-cry with which the sermon of Peter the Hermit was echoed back, and shouted aloud, "Lead us on, gallant Lion's-heart—none so worthy to lead where brave men 15 follow. Lead us on—to Jerusalem—to Jerusalem! It is the will of God! it is the will of God! Blessed is he who shall lend an arm to its fulfilment!"

The council broke up, all apparently filled with the same enthusiastic purpose, which, however, soon faded 20 in the bosom of most, and never had an existence in that of others.

Of the latter class were the Marquis Conrade and the Grand Master of the Templars, who retired together to their quarters ill at ease, and malcontent with the events 25 of the day.

[After the Council Conrade and the Grand Master talk together, and the Templar tells Conrade that a fanatical Saracen has been captured in the camp, who frankly confessed his fixed determination to assassinate Richard. The 30 Templar then hints that he will allow the assassin to escape, and that the fanatic will then resume his search, and be likely to carry out his design.]

CHAPTER XVII.

IT was the fourth day after Sir Kenneth had been dismissed from the camp; and King Richard sat in his pavilion, enjoying an evening breeze from the west, which, with unusual coolness on her wings, seemed breathed from merry England for the refreshment of her adventurous 5 monarch, as he was gradually recovering the full strength which was necessary to carry on his gigantic projects. While Richard yielded himself to visions of conquest and of glory, an equerry told him that a messenger from Saladin waited without.

“Admit him instantly,” said the king, “and with due honour, Josceline.”

The English knight accordingly introduced a person, apparently of no higher rank than a Nubian slave, whose appearance was nevertheless highly interesting. He was 15 of superb stature and nobly formed, and his commanding features, although almost jet-black, showed nothing of negro descent. He wore over his coal-black locks a milk-white turban, and over his shoulders a short mantle of the same colour, open in front and at the sleeves, under 20 which appeared a doublet of dressed leopard’s skin reaching within a handbreadth of the knee. The rest of his muscular limbs, both legs and arms, were bare, excepting that he had sandals on his feet, and wore a collar and bracelets of silver. A straight broadsword, with a handle 25 of boxwood, and a sheath covered with snake-skin, was suspended from his waist. In his right hand he held a short javelin, with a broad, bright, steel head, of a span in length, and in his left he led, by a leash of twisted silk and gold, a large and noble stag-hound.

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The messenger prostrated himself, at the same time partially uncovering his shoulders, in sign of humiliation, and, having touched the earth with his forehead, arose so far as to rest on one knee, while he delivered to the king 5 a silken napkin, inclosing another of cloth of gold, within which was a letter from Saladin in the original Arabic, with a translation into Norman-English, which may be modernized thus—

“ Saladin, king of kings, to Melech Ric, the Lion of 10 England. Whereas we are informed by thy last message that thou hast chosen war rather than peace, and our enmity rather than our friendship, we account thee as one blinded in this matter, and trust shortly to convince thee of thine error, by the help of our invincible forces of the thousand tribes, when 15 Mohammed, the Prophet of God, and Allah, the God of the Prophet, shall judge the controversy betwixt us. In what remains, we make noble account of thee, and of the gifts which thou has sent us, and of the two dwarfs, singular in their deformity as Ysop, and mirthful as the lute of Isaack. And in 20 requital of these tokens from the treasure-house of thy bounty, behold we have sent thee a Nubian slave, named Zohauk, of whom judge not by his complexion, according to the foolish ones of the earth, in respect the dark-rinded fruit hath the most exquisite flavour. Know that he is strong to execute the 25 will of his master, as Rustan of Zablestan ; also he is wise to give counsel when thou shalt learn to hold communication with him, for the Lord of Speech hath been stricken with silence betwixt the ivory walls of his palace. We commend him to thy care, hoping the hour may not be distant when he may render 30 thee good service. And herewith we bid thee farewell ; trusting that our most holy Prophet may yet call thee to a sight of the truth, failing which illumination, our desire is for the speedy restoration of thy royal health, that Allah may judge between thee and us in a plain field of battle.”

And the missive was sanctioned by the signature and seal of the soldan.

Richard surveyed the Nubian in silence as he stood before him, his looks bent upon the ground, his arms folded on his bosom, with the appearance of a black marble statue of the most exquisite workmanship, waiting life from the touch of a Prometheus. The King of England, who, as it was emphatically said of his successor Henry the Eighth, loved to look upon A MAN, was well pleased with the thews, sinews, and symmetry of him whom he now surveyed, and questioned him in the *lingua franca*—

“Art thou a pagan?”

The slave shook his head, and, raising his finger to his brow, crossed himself in token of his Christianity, then resumed his posture of motionless humility.

“A Nubian Christian, doubtless,” said Richard, “and mutilated of the organ of speech by these heathen dogs?”

The mute again slowly shook his head, in token of negative, pointed with his forefinger to heaven, and then laid it upon his own lips.

“I understand thee,” said Richard. “Thou dost suffer under the infliction of God, not by the cruelty of man. Canst thou clean an armour and belt, and buckle it in time of need?”

The mute nodded, and stepping towards the coat of mail, which hung, with the shield and helmet of the chivalrous monarch, upon the pillar of the tent, he handled it with such nicety of address as sufficiently to show that he fully understood the business of the armour-bearer.

“Thou art an apt, and wilt doubtless be a useful, knave: thou shalt wait in my chamber, and on my person,” said the king, “to show how much I value the gift of the royal soldan. If thou hast no tongue, it follows

thou canst carry no tales, neither provoke me to be sudden by any unfit reply."

The Nubian again prostrated himself till his brow touched the earth, then stood erect, at some paces distant, as waiting for his new master's commands.

"Nay, thou shalt commence thy office presently," said Richard, "for I see a speck of rust darkening on that shield; and when I shake it in the face of Saladin, it should be bright and unsullied as the soldan's honour and to mine own."

A horn was winded without, and presently Sir Henry Neville entered with a packet of despatches.

"From England, my lord," he said, as he delivered it.

"From England, our own England!" repeated Richard, 15 in a tone of melancholy enthusiasm. "Alas! they little think how hard their sovereign has been beset by sickness and sorrow, faint friends and forward enemies." Then, opening the despatches, he said hastily, "Ha! this comes from no peaceful land: they too have their feuds. Neville, 20 begone! I must peruse these tidings alone, and at leisure."

Deeper in the shadow of the pavilion, and busied with the task his new master had imposed, sat the Nubian slave, with his back rather turned towards the king. He had finished adjusting and cleaning the hauberk and 25 brigandine, and was now busily employed on a broad pavesse, or buckler, of unusual size, and covered with steel-plating, which Richard often used in reconnoitring, or actually storming fortified places, as a more effectual protection against missile weapons than the narrow triangular shield used on horseback. This pavesse bore neither the royal lions of England nor any other device to attract the observation of the defenders of the walls against which it was advanced; the care, therefore, of the armour was addressed to causing its surface to shine as

bright as crystal, in which he seemed to be peculiarly successful.

While the monarch and his new attendant were thus occupied, another actor crept upon the scene, and mingled among the group of English yeomen, about a score of 5 whom, respecting the unusually pensive posture and close occupation of their sovereign, were, contrary to their wont, keeping a silent guard in front of his tent. It was not, however, more vigilant than usual. Some were playing at games of hazard with small pebbles, others spoke together in whispers of the approaching day of battle, and several lay asleep, their bulky limbs folded in their green mantles.

Amid these careless warders glided the puny form of a little old Turk, poorly dressed like a marabout or santon 15 of the desert, a sort of enthusiast, who sometimes ventured into the camp of the Crusaders, though treated always with contumely, and often with violence.

[The soldiers make the marabout dance, and then force him to drink wine. They were interrupted in their rude sport by 20 the king, whose pavilion was near. Withdrawing to a distance, they left the dervish lying on the ground apparently exhausted by fatigue and overcome with the wine.]

CHAPTER XVIII.

FOR the space of a quarter of an hour, or longer, after the incident related, all remained perfectly quiet in the front 25 of the royal habitation. The king read, and mused in the entrance of his pavilion; behind, and with his back turned to the same entrance, the Nubian slave still burnished the

ample pavesse ; in front of all, at a hundred paces distant, the yeomen of the guard stood, sat, or lay exteuded on the grass, attentive to their own sports, but pursuing them in silence, while on the esplanade, betwixt them and the front 5 of the tent, lay, scarcely to be distinguished from a bundle of rags, the senseless form of the marabout.

But the Nubian had the advantage of a mirror, from the brilliant reflexion which the surface of the highly polished shield now afforded, by means of which he beheld, 10 to his alarm and surprise, that the marabout raised his head gently from the ground, so as to survey all around him, moving with a well-adjusted precaution, which seemed entirely inconsistent with a state of ebriety. He couched his head instantly, as if satisfied he was un- 15 observed, and began, with the slightest possible appearance of voluntary effort, to drag himself, as if by chance, ever nearer and nearer to the king, but stopping, and remaining fixed at intervals, like the spider, which, moving towards her object, collapses into apparent lifelessness, 20 when she thinks she is the subject of observation. This species of movement appeared suspicious to the Ethiopian, who, on his part, prepared himself, as quietly as possible, to interfere, the instant that interference should seem to be necessary.

25 The marabout meanwhile glided on gradually and imperceptibly, serpent-like, or rather snail-like, till he was about ten yards' distance from Richard's person, when, starting on his feet, he sprang forward with the bound of a tiger, stood at the king's back in less than an 30 instant, and brandished aloft the cangiar, or poniard, which he had hidden in his sleeve. Not the presence of his whole army could have saved their heroic monarch ; but the motions of the Nubian had been as well-calculated as those of the enthusiast, and ere the latter could strike,

the former caught his uplifted arm. Turning his fanatical wrath upon what thus unexpectedly interposed betwixt him and his object, the Charegite, for such was the seeming marabout, dealt the Nubian a blow with the dagger, which, however, only grazed his arm, while the far superior strength of the Ethiopian easily dashed him to the ground. Aware of what had passed, Richard had now arisen, and, with little more of surprise, anger, or interest of any kind in his countenance than an ordinary man would show in brushing off and crushing an intrusive wasp, caught up 10 the stool on which he had been sitting, and exclaiming only, "Ha, dog!" dashed almost to pieces the skull of the assassin, who uttered twice, once in a loud, and once in a broken tone, the words "*Allah ackbar!*"—God is victorious—and expired at the king's feet. 15

"Ye are careful warders," said Richard to his archers, in a tone of scornful reproach, as, aroused by the bustle of what had passed, in terror and tumult they now rushed into his tent; "watchful sentinels ye are, to leave me to do such hangman's work with my own hand. Be silent, 20 all of you, and cease your senseless clamour! Saw ye never a dead Turk before? Here, cast that carrion out of the camp, strike the head from the trunk, and stick it on a lance, taking care to turn the face to Mecca, that he may the easier tell the foul impostor, on whose inspiration 25 he came hither, how he has sped on his errand. For thee, my swart and silent friend—" he added, turning to the Ethiopian. "But how's this? Thou art wounded—and with a poisoned weapon, I warrant me, for by force of stab so weak an animal as that could scarce hope to do 30 more than raze the lion's hide. Suck the poison from his wound, one of you: the venom is harmless on the lips, though fatal when it mingles with the blood."

The yeomen looked on each other confusedly and with

hesitation, the apprehension of so strange a danger prevailing with those who feared no other.

“How now, sirrahs,” continued the king, “are you dainty-lipped, or do you fear death, that you dally thus?”

5 “Not the death of a man,” said Long Allen, to whom the king looked as he spoke; “but methinks I would not die like a poisoned rat for the sake of a black chattel there, that is bought and sold in a market like a Martlemas ox.”

10 “His Grace speaks to men of sucking poison,” muttered another yeoman, “as if he said, ‘Go to, swallow a gooseberry!’”

“Nay,” said Richard, “I never bade man do that which I would not do myself.”

15 And, without further ceremony, and in spite of the general expostulations of those around, and the respectful opposition of the Nubian himself, the King of England applied his lips to the wound of the black slave, treating with ridicule all remonstrances, and overpowering all

20 resistance. He had no sooner intermitted his singular occupation than the Nubian started from him, and, casting a scarf over his arm, intimated by gestures, as firm in purpose as they were respectful in manner, his determination not to permit the monarch to renew so degrading an

25 employment.

Neville, who entered with other officers, added his remonstrances.

“Nay, nay, make not a heedless halloo about a hart that the hounds have lost, or a danger when it is over,”
30 said the king. “The wound will be a trifle, for the blood is scarce drawn—an angry cat had dealt a deeper scratch.”

The yeomen, abashed and mortified, withdrew to their post, and Neville was beginning to remonstrate with his master upon the risk of passing over thus slightly their

negligence upon their duty, and the propriety of an example in a case so peculiarly aggravated as the permitting one so suspicious as the marabout to approach within dagger's length of his person, when Richard interrupted him with—

“ Speak not of it, Neville. Wouldst thou have me avenge a petty risk to myself more severely than the loss of England's banner? It has been stolen—stolen by a thief, or delivered up by a traitor, and no blood has been shed for it. My sable friend, thou art an expounder of 10 mysteries, saith the illustrious soldan: now would I give thee thine own weight in gold, if, by raising one still blacker than thyself, or by what other means thou wilt, thou couldst show me the thief who did mine honour that wrong. What say'st thou—ha ?”

The mute seemed desirous to speak, but uttered only that imperfect sound proper to his melancholy condition, then folded his arms, looked on the king with an eye of intelligence, and nodded in answer to his question.

“ How ! ” said Richard, with joyful impatience. 20 “ Wilt thou undertake to make discovery in this matter ? ”

The Nubian slave repeated the same motion.

“ But how shall we understand each other ? ” said the king. “ Canst thou write, good fellow ? ”

The slave again nodded in assent.

“ Give him writing-tools,” said the king. “ They were readier in my father's tent than mine ; but they be somewhere about, if this scorching climate have not dried up the ink. Why, this fellow is a jewel—a black 30 diamond, Neville.”

“ So please you, my liege,” said Neville, “ if I might speak my poor mind, it were ill dealing in this ware. This man must be a wizard, and wizards deal with

the Enemy, who hath most interest to sow tares among the wheat, and bring dissension into our councils, and——”

“Peace, Neville,” said Richard. “Halloo to you 5 Northern hound when he is close on the haunch of the deer, and hope to recall him, but seek not to stop Plantagenet when he hath hope to retrieve his honour.”

The slave, who during this discussion had been writing, in which art he seemed skilful, now arose, 10 and, pressing what he had written to his brow, prostrated himself as usual, ere he delivered it into the king’s hands. The scroll was in French, although their intercourse had hitherto been conducted by Richard in the *lingua franca*.

15 “To Richard, the conquering and invincible King of England, this from the humblest of his slaves. Mysteries are the sealed caskets of Heaven, but wisdom may devise means to open the lock. Were your slave stationed where the leaders of the Christian host were made to pass before 20 him in order, doubt nothing that, if he who did the injury whereof my king complains shall be among the number, he may be made manifest in his iniquity, though it be hidden under seven veils.”

“Now, by St. George!” said King Richard, “thou 25 hast spoken most opportunely. Neville, thou know’st that, when we muster our troops to-morrow, the princes have agreed that, to expiate the front offered to England in the theft of her banner, the leaders should pass our new standard as it floats on St. George’s Mount, and 30 salute it with formal regard. Believe me, the secret traitor will not dare to absent himself from an expurgation so solemn, lest his very absence should be matter of suspicion. There will we place our sable man

of counsel, and, if his art can detect the villain, leave me to deal with him."

"But," continued the baron anxiously, "what hope that this juggling slave of Saladin will not palter with your Grace?"

"Peace, Neville!" said the king. "Thou think'st thyself mighty wise, and art but a fool. Mind thou my charge touching this fellow: there is more in him than thy Westmoreland wit can fathom. And thou, swart and silent, prepare to perform the feat thou hast promised, ⁵ and, by the word of a king, thou shalt choose thine own recompense. Lo, he writes again."

The mute accordingly wrote and delivered to the king, with the same form as before, another slip of paper, containing these words: "The will of the king ¹⁵ is the law to his slave, nor doth it become him to ask guerdon for discharge of his devoir."

"'Guerdon' and 'devoir!'" said the king, interrupting himself as he read, and speaking to Neville in the English tongue, with some emphasis on the words. ²⁰ "These Eastern people will profit by the Crusaders: they are acquiring the language of chivalry! And see, Neville, how discomposed that fellow looks: were it not for his colour, he would blush. I should not think it strange if he understood what I say: they are perilous ²⁵ linguists."

"The poor slave cannot endure your Grace's eyes," said Neville: "it is nothing more."

"Well, but," continued the king, striking the paper with his finger as he proceeded, "this bold scroll proceeds to say that our trusty mute is charged with a message from Saladin to the Lady Edith Plantagenet, and craves means and opportunity to deliver it. What think'st thou of a request so modest—ha, Neville?"

“I cannot say,” said Neville, “how such freedom may relish with your Grace; but the lease of the messenger’s neck would be a short one who should carry such a request to the soldan on the part of your Majesty.”

5 “Nay, I thank Heaven that I covet none of his sun-burnt beauties,” said Richard; “and for punishing this fellow for discharging his master’s errand, and that when he has just saved my life—methinks it were something too summary. I’ll tell thee, Neville, a secret; for, although our sable and mute minister be present, he cannot, thou know’st, tell it over again, even if he should chance to understand us. I tell thee, that, for this fortnight past, I have been under a strange spell, and I would I were disenchanted. I will say nothing concerning the request of this our sable attendant, save that it is an unusually bold one, and that his best chance of finding grace in our eyes will be to endeavour to make the discovery which he proposes to achieve in our behalf. Meanwhile, Neville, do thou look well to him, and let 15 him be honourably cared for. And hark thee once more,” he said in a low whisper, “seek out yonder hermit of Engaddi, and bring him to me forthwith, be he saint or savage, madman or sane. Let me see him privately.”

CHAPTER XIX.

OUR narrative retrogrades to a period shortly previous to 25 the incidents last mentioned, when, as the reader must remember, the unfortunate Knight of the Leopard, bestowed upon the Arabian physician by King Richard, rather as a slave than in any other capacity, was exiled

from the camp of the Crusaders, in whose ranks he had so often and so brilliantly distinguished himself. He followed his new master, for so we must now term the Hakim, to the Moorish tents which contained his retinue and his property, with the stupefied feelings of one who, fallen from the summit of a precipice, and escaping unexpectedly with life, is just able to drag himself from the fatal spot, but without the power of estimating the extent of the damage which he has sustained. Arrived at the tent, he threw himself, without speech of any kind, upon a couch 10 of dressed buffalo's hide, which was pointed out to him by his conductor, and, hiding his face betwixt his hands, groaned heavily, as if his heart were on the point of bursting. The physician heard him, as he was giving orders to his numerous domestics to prepare for their 15 departure the next morning before daybreak, and, moved with compassion, interrupted his occupation to sit down, cross-legged, by the side of his couch, and administer comfort according to the Oriental manner.

"My friend," he said, "be of good comfort; for what 20 sayeth the poet, 'It is better that a man should be the servant of a kind master than the slave of his own wild passions.'"

Sir Kenneth was awake long after his Arab host had performed his usual devotions and betaken himself to his repose, nor had sleep visited him at the hour of midnight, when a movement took place among the domestics, which, though attended with no speech and very little noise, made him aware they were loading the camels and preparing for departure. In the course of 25 30 these preparations, the last person who was disturbed, excepting the physician himself, was the Knight of Scotland, whom, about three in the morning, a sort of major-domo, or master of the household, acquainted that he must arise.

He did so, without further answer, and followed him into the moonlight, where stood the camels, most of which were already loaded, and one only remained kneeling until its burden should be completed.

5 A little apart from the camels stood a number of horses ready bridled and saddled, and the Hakim himself, coming forth, mounted on one of them with as much agility as the grave decorum of his character permitted, and directed another, which he pointed out, to be led towards Sir 10 Kenneth. An English officer was in attendance, to escort them through the camp of the Crusaders and to insure their leaving it in safety, and all was ready for their departure. The pavilion which they had left was, in the meanwhile, struck with singular despatch, and the tent-15 poles and coverings composed the burden of the last camel, when the physician, pronouncing solemnly the verse of the Koran, "God be our guide, and Mohammed our protector, in the desert as in the watered field," the whole cavalcade was instantly in motion.

20 During the journey, the attention of the exile, however abstracted by his own deep sorrow, was occasionally awakened by the low wail of a dog, secured in a wicker inclosure suspended on one of the camels, which, as an experienced woodsman, he had no hesitation in recognizing 25 to be that of his own faithful hound.

“Alas! poor Roswal,” he said, “thou callest for aid and sympathy upon one in stricter bondage than thou thyself art. I will not seem to heed thee, or return thy affection, since it would serve but to load our parting with 30 yet more bitterness.”

Thus passed the hours of night, and the space of dim hazy dawn which forms the twilight of a Syrian morning. But when the very first line of the sun’s disc began to rise above the level horizon, and when the very first level ray

shot glimmering in dew along the surface of the desert, which the travellers had now attained, the sonorous voice of El Hakim caused to resound along the sands the solemn summons which the muezzins thunder at morning from the minaret of every mosque.

5

“To prayer! to prayer! God is the one God. To prayer! to prayer! Mohammed is the prophet of God. To prayer! to prayer! Time is flying from you. To prayer! to prayer! Judgment is drawing nigh to you.”

In an instant each Moslem cast himself from his horse, 10 turned his face towards Mecca, and performed with sand an imitation of those ablutions which were elsewhere required to be made with water, while each individual, in brief but fervent ejaculations, recommended himself to the care, and his sins to the forgiveness, of God and the 15 Prophet.

Even Sir Kenneth, whose reason at once and prejudices were offended by seeing his companions in that which he considered as an act of idolatry, could not help respecting the sincerity of their misguided zeal.

20

Meanwhile the party of Saracens regained their saddles and continued their route. Sir Kenneth could soon see, at the distance of a mile or more, a dark object moving rapidly on the bosom of the desert, which his experienced eye recognized for a party of cavalry, much superior to 25 their own in numbers, and, from the thick and frequent flashes which flung back the level beams of the rising sun, it was plain that these were Europeans in their complete panoply.

“What fear you from these Christian horsemen, for 30 such they seem?” he said to the Hakim.

“Fear!” said El Hakim, repeating the word disdainfully. “The sage fears nothing but Heaven, but ever expects from wicked men the worst which they can do.”

“They are Christians,” said Sir Kenneth, “and it is the time of truce—why should you fear a breach of faith?”

“They are the priestly soldiers of the Temple,” answered 5 El Hakim, “whose vow limits them to know neither truth nor faith with the worshippers of Islam. May the Prophet blight them, both root, branch, and twig! Their peace is war, and their faith is falsehood. But they will be disappointed: *I* know the war of the desert yet better than 10 they.”

He spoke a few words to his principal officer, and his whole demeanour and countenance was at once changed from the solemn repose of an Eastern sage, accustomed more to contemplation than to action, into the prompt and 15 proud expression of a gallant soldier, whose energies are roused by the near approach of a danger which he at once foresees and despises.

To Sir Kenneth’s eyes the approaching crisis had a different aspect, and when Adonbec said to him, “Thou 20 must tarry close by my side,” he answered solemnly in the negative.

“Yonder,” he said, “are my comrades in arms, the men in whose society I have vowed to fight or fall; on their banner gleams the sign of our most blessed redemption. 25 I cannot fly from the Cross in company with the Crescent.”

“Fool!” said the Hakim. “Their first action would be to do thee to death, were it only to conceal their breach of the truce.”

30 “Of that I must take my chance,” replied Sir Kenneth; “but I wear not the bonds of the infidels an instant longer than I can cast them from me.”

“Then will I compel thee to follow me,” said El Hakim.

"Compe'!" answered Sir Kenneth, angrily. "Wert thou not my benefactor, or one who has showed will to be such, and were it not that it is to thy confidence I owe the freedom of these hands, which thou mightst have loaded with fetters, I would show thee that, unarmed as I am, 5 compulsion would be no easy task."

"Enough, enough," replied the Arabian physician, "we lose time even when it is becoming precious."

So saying, he threw his arm aloft, and uttered a loud and shrill cry, as a signal to those of his retinue, who 10 instantly dispersed themselves on the face of the desert, in as many different directions as a chaplet of beads when the string is broken. Sir Kenneth had no time to note what ensued, for at the same instant the Hakim seized the rein of his steed, and, putting his own to its mettle, both 15 sprang forth at once with the suddenness of light, and at a pitch of velocity which almost deprived the Scottish knight of the power of respiration, and left him absolutely incapable, had he been desirous, to have checked the career of his guide. Practised as Sir Kenneth was in horsemanship from his earliest youth, the speediest horse he had ever mounted was a tortoise in comparison to those of the 20 Arabian sage. They spurned the sand from behind them, they seemed to devour the desert before them, miles flew away with minutes, and yet their strength seemed un- 25 abated, and their respiration as free as when they first started upon the wonderful race.

It was not until after an hour of this portentous motion, and when all human pursuit was far, far behind, that the Hakim at length relaxed his speed, and, slackening the 30 pace of the horses into a hand gallop, began, in a voice as composed and even as if he had been walking for the last hour, a descent upon the excellence of his coursers to the Scot, who, breathless, half blind, half deaf, and altogether

giddy, from the rapidity of this singular ride, hardly comprehended the words which flowed so freely from his companion.

“These horses,” he said, “are of the breed called the Winged, equal in speed to aught excepting the Borak of the Prophet. They are fed on the golden barley of Yemen, mixed with spices, and with a small portion of dried sheep’s flesh. Kings have given provinces to possess them, and their age is active as their youth.”

10 The Scottish knight, who had now begun to recover his breath and powers of attention, could not help acknowledging in his heart the advantage possessed by these Eastern warriors in a race of animals, alike proper for advance or retreat, and so admirably adapted to the level 15 and sandy deserts of Arabia and Syria.

They were approaching the fountain called the Diamond of the Desert, which had been the scene of his interview on a former occasion with the Saracen Emir Sheerkohf, or Ilderim. In a few minutes they checked their horses 20 beside the spring, and the Hakim invited Sir Kenneth to descend from horseback, and repose himself as in a place of safety. They unbridled their steeds, El Hakim observing that further care of them was unnecessary, since they would be speedily joined by some of the best-mounted 25 among his slaves, who would do what further was needful.

“Meantime,” he said, spreading some food on the grass, “eat and drink, and be not discouraged. Fortune may raise up or abuse the ordinary mortal, but the sage and the soldier should have minds beyond her control.”

30 The Scottish knight endeavoured to testify his thanks by showing himself docile; but fasting, lassitude, and fatigue oppressed his bodily powers. El Hakim examined his hurried pulse, his red and inflamed eye, his heated hand, and his shortened respiration.

“The mind,” he said, “grows wise by watching, but her sister the body, of coarser materials, needs the support of repose. Thou must sleep; and that thou mayst do so to refreshment, thou must take a draught mingled with this elixir.”

He drew from his bosom a small crystal vial, cased in silver filigree-work, and dropped into a little golden drinking-cup a small portion of a dark-coloured fluid.

5

“I have seen too much of thy skill, sage Hakim,” said Sir Kenneth, “to debate thine hest,” and swallowed the narcotic, mingled as it was with some water from the spring, then wrapped him in the haik, or Arab cloak, which had been fastened to his saddle-pommel, and, according to the directions of the physician, stretched himself at ease in the shade to await the promised repose. Sleep came not 15 at first, but in her stead a train of pleasing, yet not rousing or awakening sensations. Gradually, as the intellectual sight became overclouded, these gay visions became obscure, like the dying hues of sunset, until they were at last lost in total oblivion; and Sir Kenneth lay extended at the 20 feet of El Hakim, to all appearance, but for his deep respiration, as inanimate a corpse as if life had actually departed.

[When Sir Kenneth awoke from his deep sleep, he found himself in a tent furnished with Oriental luxury. Hearing the 25 voice of the physician at the door, the knight invited him in, and was then greatly astonished to find that the physician and Ilderim of Kurdistan, called also Sheerkolif, were the same person. The Saracen again urged Sir Kenneth to flee to the court of Saladin, and the Scot again refused. The Saracen 30 then told Sir Kenneth that there was a way of detecting the thief who had secretly stolen the banner from St. George’s Mount, if he would be guided and let the wise instruct.]

“And thou art wise, Ilderim,” said the Scot, “wise

though a Saracen, and generous though an infidel. I have witnessed that thou art both. Take, then the guidance of this matter; and so thou ask nothing of me contrary to my loyalty and my Christian faith, I will obey thee punctually. Do what thou hast said, and take my life when it is accomplished."

"Listen thou to me, then," said the Saracen. "Thy noble hound is now recovered, by the blessing of that divine medicine which healeth man and beast, and by his sagacity shall those who assailed him be discovered."

"Ha!" said the knight. "Methinks I comprehend thee. I was dull not to think of this!"

"But tell me," added the Emir, "hast thou any followers or retainers in the camp by whom the animal may be known?"

"I dismissed," said Sir Kenneth, "my old attendant, thy patient, with a varlet that waited on him, at the time when I expected to suffer death, giving him letters for my friends in Scotland: there are none other to whom the dog is familiar. But then my own person is well known —my very speech will betray me, in a camp where I have played no mean part for many months."

"Both he and thou shalt be disguised, so as to escape even close examination. I tell thee," said the Saracen, "that not thy brother in arms, not thy brother in blood, shall discover thee, if thou be guided by my counsels. But mark me, there is still the condition annexed to this service, that thou deliver a letter of Saladin to the niece of the Melech Ric, whose name is as difficult to our Eastern tongue and lips as her beauty is delightful to our eyes."

Sir Kenneth paused before he answered, and the Saracen, observing his hesitation, demanded of him, "if he feared to undertake this message?"

"Not if there were death in the execution," said Sir

Kenneth. “I do but pause to consider whether it consists with my honour to bear the letter of the Soldan, or with that of the Lady Edith to receive it from a heathen prince.”

“By the head of Mohammed, and by the honour of a 5 soldier, by the tomb at Mecca, and by the soul of my father,” said the emir, “I swear to thee that the letter is written in all honour and respect.”

“Then,” said the knight, “I will bear the Soldan’s letter faithfully, as if I were his born vassal.” 10

CHAPTER XX.

THE reader can now have little doubt who the Ethiopian slave really was, with what purpose he had sought Richard’s camp, and wherefore and with what hope he now stood close to the person of that monarch, as, surrounded by his valiant peers of England and Normandy, 15 Cœur de Lion stood on the summit of St. George’s Mount, with the banner of England by his side.

The powers of the various Crusading princes, arrayed under their royal and princely leaders, swept in long order around the base of the little mound ; and as those of each 20 different country passed by, their commanders advanced a step or two up the hill, and made a signal of courtesy to Richard and to the standard of England, “in sign of regard and amity,” as the protocol of the ceremony heedfully expressed it, “not of subjection or vassalage.” The spiritual 25 dignitaries, who in those days veiled not their bonnets to created being, bestowed on the king and his symbol of command their blessing instead of rendering obeisance.

The good king was seated on horseback about halfway up the mount, a morion on his head, surmounted by a crown, which left his manly features exposed to public view, as with cool and considerate eye he perused each rank as it passed him, and returned the salutation of the leaders. His tunic was of sky-coloured velvet, covered with plates of silver, and his hose of crimson silk, slashed with cloth of gold. By his side stood the seeming Ethiopian slave, holding the noble dog in a leash such as was used in woodcraft. Over the king's head streamed the large folds of the banner.

On the very summit of the mount, a wooden turret, erected for the occasion, held the Queen Berengaria and the principal ladies of the court. To this the king looked from time to time, and then ever and anon his eyes were turned on the Nubian and the dog, but only when such leaders approached as, from circumstances of previous ill-will, he suspected of being accessory to the theft of the standard, or whom he judged capable of a crime so mean.

Thus, he did not look in that direction when Philip Augustus of France approached at the head of his splendid troops of Gallic chivalry—nay, he anticipated the motions of the French king by descending the mount as the latter came up the ascent, so that they met in the middle space, and blended their greetings so gracefully that it appeared they met in fraternal equality.

Richard's demeanour was different when the dark-armed knights and squires of the Temple chivalry approached—men with countenances bronzed to Asiatic blackness by the suns of Palestine, and the admirable state of whose horses and appointments far surpassed even that of the choicest troops of France and England. The king cast a hasty glance aside, but the Nubian stood quiet, and his trusty dog sat at his feet, watching, with a

sagacious yet pleased look, the ranks which now passed before them. The king's look turned again on the chivalrous Templars, as the Grand Master, availing himself of his mingled character, bestowed his benediction on Richard as a priest, instead of doing him reverence as a military leader. 5

"The misproud and amphibious caitiff puts the monk upon me," said Richard to the Earl of Salisbury. "But, Longsword, we will let it pass. Lo you, here comes our valiant adversary, the Duke of Austria. Mark his manner 10 and bearing, Longsword; and thou, Nubian, let the hound have full view of him."

As he advanced towards Richard he whistled in what he wished to be considered as an indifferent manner, though his heavy features evinced the sullenness, mixed 15 with the fear, with which a truant schoolboy may be seen to approach his master.

King Richard looked more than once at the Nubian and his dog; but the former moved not, nor did the latter strain at the leash, so that Richard said to the slave with 20 some scorn, "Thy success in this enterprise, my sable friend, even though thou hast brought thy hound's sagacity to back thine own, will not, I fear, place thee high in the rank of wizards, or much augment thy merits towards our person." 25

The Nubian answered, as usual, only by a lowly obeisance.

Meantime the troops of the Marquis of Montserrat next passed in order before the King of England. That powerful and wily baron, to make the greatest display 30 of his forces, had divided them into two bodies. At the head of the first, consisting of his vassals and followers, and levied from his Syrian possessions, came his brother Enguerrand, and he himself followed, leading on a gallant

band of twelve hundred Stradiots, a kind of light cavalry raised by the Venetians in their Dalmatian possessions, and of which they had intrusted the command to the marquis, with whom the republic had many bonds of connection. These Stradiots were clothed in a fashion partly European, but partaking chiefly of the Eastern fashion.

Before this goodly band came Conrade, in the same garb with the Stradiots, but of such rich stuff that he seemed to blaze with gold and silver, and the milk-white plume fastened in his cap by a clasp of diamonds seemed tall enough to sweep the clouds. The noble steed which he reined bounded and caracoled, and displayed his spirit and agility in a manner which might have troubled a less admirable horseman than the marquis, who gracefully ruled him with the one hand, while the other displayed the baton, whose predominancy over the ranks which he led seemed equally absolute.

Conrade, who, by cultivating Richard's humour, had attained a certain degree of favour with him, no sooner was come within his ken than the King of England descended a step or two to meet him, exclaiming at the same time—

“ Ha, lord marquis, thou at the head of the fleet Stradiots ? ”

Conrade was commencing his reply with a smile, when Roswal, the noble hound, uttering a furious and savage yell, sprang forward. The Nubian, at the same time, slipped the leash, and the hound, rushing on, leapt upon Conrade's noble charger, and, seizing the marquis by the throat, pulled him down from the saddle. The plumed rider lay rolling on the sand, and the frightened horse fled in wild career through the camp.

“ Thy hound hath pulled down the right quarry, I

warrant him," said the king to the Nubian, "and I vow to St. George he is a stag of ten tines! Pluck the dog off, lest he throttle him."

The Ethiopian, accordingly, though not without difficulty, disengaged the dog from Conrade, and fastened him 5 up, still highly excited, and struggling in the leash. Meanwhile, many crowded to the spot, especially followers of Conrade and officers of the Stradiots, who, as they saw their leader lie gazing wildly on the sky, raised him up amid a tumultuary cry of, "Cut the slave and his hound 10 to pieces!"

But the voice of Richard, loud and sonorous, was heard clear above all other exclamations—

"He dies the death who injures the hound! He hath but done his duty, after the sagacity with which God and 15 nature have endowed the brave animal. Stand forward for a false traitor, thou Conrade, Marquis of Montserrat! I impeach thee of treason."

"I never touched the banner," said Conrade hastily.

"Thy words betray thee, Conrade!" said Richard; 20 "for how didst thou know, save from conscious guilt, that the question is concerning the banner?"

"Hast thou, then, not kept the camp in turmoil on that and no other score?" answered Conrade. "And dost thou impute to a prince and an ally a crime which, after 25 all, was probably committed by some paltry felon for the sake of the gold thread? Or wouldst thou now impeach a confederate on the credit of a dog?"

By this time the alarm was becoming general, so that Philip of France interposed.

30

"Princes and nobles," he said, "you speak in presence of those whose swords will soon be at the throats of each other, if they hear their leaders at such terms together. In the name of Heaven, let us draw off, each his own

troops, into their separate quarters, and ourselves meet an hour hence in the pavilion of council, to take some order in this new state of confusion."

"Content," said King Richard, "though I should have liked to have interrogated that caitiff while his gay doublet was yet besmirched with sand. But the pleasure of France shall be ours in this matter."

The Council assembled at the appointed hour. Conrade had in the meanwhile laid aside his dishonoured dress, and with it the shame and confusion which, in spite of his talents and promptitude, had at first overwhelmed him, owing to the strangeness of the accident and suddenness of the accusation. He was now robed like a prince, and entered the council-chamber attended by the Arch-
duke of Austria, the Grand Masters both of the Temple and of the Order of St. John, and several other potentates.

Richard entered the Council with his usual indifference of manner, and in the same dress in which he had just alighted from horseback. He cast a careless and somewhat scornful glance on the leaders, who had with studied affectation arranged themselves around Conrade, as if owning his cause, and in the most direct terms charged Conrade of Montserrat with having stolen the banner of England, and wounded the faithful animal who stood in its defence.

Conrade arose boldly to answer, and in despite, as he expressed himself, of man and brute, king or dog, avouched his innocence of the crime charged.

"Brother of England," said Philip, who willingly assumed the character of moderator of the assembly, "this is an unusual impeachment. We do not hear you avouch your own knowledge of this matter, further than your belief resting upon the demeanour of this hound towards the Marquis of Montserrat. Surely the word of

a knight and a prince should bear him out against the barking of a cur?"

"Royal brother," returned Richard, "recollect that the Almighty, who gave the dog to be companion of our pleasures and our toils, hath invested him with a nature 5 noble and incapable of deceit. He forgets neither friend nor foe—remembers, and with accuracy, both benefit and injury. He hath a share of man's intelligence, but no share of man's falsehood. You may bribe a soldier to slay a man with his sword, or a witness to take life by 10 false accusation; but you cannot make a hound tear his benefactor: he is the friend of man, save when man justly incurs his enmity. But there lies our own glove," said Richard; "we appeal him to the combat in respect of the evidence we brought forth against him. A king, at least, 15 is more than the mate of a marquis."

"Princes and nobles," said Conrade, "I will not accept of King Richard's defiance. He hath been chosen our leader against the Saracens, and if *his* conscience can answer the accusation of provoking an ally to the field 20 on a quarrel so frivolous, *mine*, at least, cannot endure the reproach of accepting it. But touching his half brother, William of Woodstock, or against any other who shall adopt, or shall dare to stand godfather to, this most false charge, I will defend my honour in the lists, and 25 prove whosoever impeaches it a false liar."

"Methinks it might so terminate," said the King of France, "provided King Richard will recall his accusation, as made upon over-slight grounds."

"Philip of France," answered Cœur de Lion, "my 30 words shall never do my thoughts so much injury. I have charged yonder Conrade as a thief, who, under cloud of night, stole from its place the emblem of England's dignity. I still believe and charge him to be such; and

when a day is appointed for the combat, doubt not that, since Conrade declines to meet us in person, I will find a champion to appear in support of my challenge."

"Since my rank makes me arbiter in this most unhappy matter," said Philip of France, "I appoint the fifth day from hence for the decision thereof, by way of combat, according to knightly usage—Richard, King of England, to appear by his champion as appellant, and Conrade, Marquis of Montserrat, in his own person, as defendant. Yet I own, I know not where to find neutral ground where such a quarrel may be fought out; for it must not be in the neighbourhood of this camp, where the soldiers would make faction on the different sides."

"It were well," said Richard, "to apply to the generosity of the royal Saladin, since, heathen as he is, I have never known knight more fulfilled of nobleness, or to whose good faith we may so peremptorily intrust ourselves. I speak thus for those who may be doubtful of mishap: for myself, wherever I see my foe, I make that spot my battle-ground."

CHAPTER XXI.

WHEN King Richard returned to his tent, he commanded the Nubian to be brought before him. He entered with his usual ceremonial reverence, and, having prostrated himself, remained standing before the king, in the attitude of a slave awaiting the orders of his master.

"Thou canst well of wood-craft," said the king after a pause, "and hast started thy game and brought him to bay as ably as if Tristrem himself had taught thee. But

this is not all: he must be brought down at force. I myself would have liked to have levelled my hunting-spear at him. There are, it seems, respects which prevent this. Thou art about to return to the camp of the Soldan, bearing a letter requiring of his courtesy to appoint neutral ground for the deed of chivalry, and, should it consist with his pleasure, to concur with us in witnessing it. Now, speaking conjecturally, we think thou mightst find in that camp some cavalier who, for the love of truth and his own augmentation of honour, will do battle with ¹⁰ this same traitor of Montserrat."

The Nubian raised his eyes and fixed them on the king with a look of eager ardour, then raised them to heaven with such solemn gratitude that the water soon glistened in them, then bent his head, as affirming what ¹⁵ Richard desired, and resumed his usual posture of submissive attention.

"It is well; and I see thy desire to oblige me in this matter. And now to another point," said the king, speaking suddenly and rapidly. "Have you yet seen ²⁰ Edith Plantagenet?"

The mute looked up as in the act of being about to speak, nay, his lips had begun to utter a distinct negative, when the abortive attempt died away in the imperfect murmurs of the dumb. ²⁵

"Why, lo you there!" said the king. "The very sound of the name of a royal maiden, of beauty so surpassing as that of our lovely cousin, seems to have power enough well-nigh to make the dumb speak. What miracles then might her eye work upon such a subject! ³⁰ I will make the experiment, friend slave. Thou shalt see this choice beauty of our court, and do the errand of the princely Soldan."

Again a joyful glance, again a genuflection; but, as he

arose, the king laid his hand heavily on his shoulder, and proceeded with stern gravity thus—

“Let me in one thing warn you, my sable envoy. Even if thou shouldst feel that the kindly influence of ⁵ her whom thou art soon to behold should loosen the bonds of thy tongue, presently imprisoned, as the good Soldan expresses it, within the ivory walls of its castle, beware how thou changest thy taciturn character, or speakest a word in her presence, even if thy powers of utterance ¹⁰ were to be miraculously restored.”

The Nubian, so soon as the king had removed his heavy grasp from his shoulder, bent his head and laid his hand on his lips in token of silent obedience.

But Richard again laid his hand on him more gently, ¹⁵ and added—

“This behest we lay on thee as on a slave. Wert thou knight and gentleman, we would require thine honour in pledge of thy silence, which is one especial condition of our present trust.”

²⁰ The Ethiopian raised his body proudly, looked full at the king, and laid his right hand on his heart.

Richard then summoned his chamberlain. “Go, Neville,” he said, “with this slave, to the tent of our royal consort, and say it is our pleasure that he have an ²⁵ audience—a private audience—of our cousin Edith. He is charged with a commission to her. And thou, too, friend Ethiop,” the king continued, “what thou dost, do quickly, and return hither within the half-hour.”

“I stand discovered,” thought the seeming Nubian, as, ³⁰ with downcast looks and folded arms, he followed the hasty stride of Neville towards the tent of Queen Berengaria. “I stand undoubtedly discovered and unfolded to King Richard; yet I cannot perceive that his resentment is hot against me.”

Neville and the Nubian were of course admitted by the guards, and Neville, leaving the slave in a small apartment, or antechamber, which was but too well remembered by him, passed into that which was used as the queen's presence-chamber. He communicated his royal master's pleasure in a low and respectful tone of voice, very different from the bluntness of Thomas de Vaux, to whom Richard was everything, and the rest of the Court, including Berengaria herself, was nothing. A burst of laughter followed the communication of his errand. 10

"And what like is the Nubian slave, who comes ambassador on such an errand from the Soldan?—a negro, De Neville, is he not?" said a female voice, easily recognized for that of Berengaria. "Gentle Neville, thou art ever prompt to pleasure us poor women, who have so 15 little to pass away our idle moments. We must see this messenger of love. Turks and Moors have I seen many, but negro never."

"I am created to obey your Grace's commands, so you will bear me out with my sovereign for doing so," answered 20 the debonair knight. "Yet, let me assure your Grace, you will see somewhat different from what you expect."

"So much the better: uglier yet than our imaginations can fancy, yet the chosen love-messenger of this gallant Soldan!" 25

After a little whispering, the English knight again returned to the Ethiopian, and made him a sign to follow. He did so, and Neville conducted him to a pavilion pitched somewhat apart from that of the queen, for the accommodation, it seemed, of the Lady Edith and her attendants. 30 In the space of a very few minutes, the Nubian was ushered into Edith's presence, while Neville was left on the outside of the tent.

When Edith came within a step of the kneeling and

motionless slave, she held the light towards his face, as if to peruse his features more attentively, then turned from him, and placed her lamp so as to throw the shadow of his face in profile upon the curtain which hung beside. 5 She at length spoke in a voice composed, yet deeply sorrowful.

“Is it you? Is it indeed you, brave Knight of the Leopard, gallant Sir Kenneth of Scotland? Is it indeed you, thus servilely disguised, thus surrounded by a hundred 10 dangers?”

At hearing the tones of his lady’s voice thus unexpectedly addressed to him, and in a tone of compassion approaching to tenderness, a corresponding reply rushed to the knight’s lips, and scarce could Richard’s commands, 15 and his own promised silence, prevent his answering that the sight he saw, the sounds he just heard, were sufficient to recompense the slavery of a life, and dangers which threatened that life every hour. He *did* recollect himself, however, and a deep and impassioned sigh was his only 20 reply to the high-born Edith’s question.

“I see, I know I have guessed right,” continued Edith.

“I marked you from your first appearance near the platform on which I stood with the queen. I knew, too, your valiant hound. She is no true lady, and is unworthy of 25 the service of such a knight as thou art, from whom disguises of dress or hue could conceal a faithful servant. Speak, then, without fear, to Edith Plantagenet. She knows how to grace in adversity the good knight who served, honoured, and did deeds of arms in her name, 30 when fortune befriended him. Still silent! Is it fear or shame that keeps thee so? Fear should be unknown to thee; and for shame, let it remain with those who have wronged thee.”

The knight, in despair at being obliged to play the

mute in an interview so interesting, could only express his mortification by sighing deeply and laying his finger upon his lips. Edith stepped back, as if somewhat displeased.

“What!” she said, “the Asiatic mute in very deed, as well as in attire? This I looked not for.”

5

The disguised knight almost involuntarily looked towards the letter as an apology for protracting his stay. She snatched it up, saying in a tone of irony and contempt—

“I had forgotten: the dutiful slave waits an answer to ^{to} his message. How’s this—from the Soldan!”

She hastily ran over the contents, which were expressed both in Arabic and French, and when she had done, she laughed in bitter anger.

“Now this passes imagination!” she said. “No jone- 15
gleur can show so deft a transmutation. But it avails not talking to the willing slave of a heathen hound. Tell your master, when his scourge shall have found thee a tongue, that which thou hast seen me do.” So saying, she threw the Soldan’s letter on the ground, and placed her 20 foot upon it. “And say to him, that Edith Plantagenet scorns the homage of an unchristened Pagan.”

With these words she was about to shoot from the knight, when, kneeling at her feet in bitter agony, he ventured to lay his hand upon her robe and oppose her 25 departure.

“Heardst thou not what I said, dull slave?” she said, turning short round on him, and speaking with emphasis. “Tell the heathen Soldan, thy master, that I scorn his suit as much as I despise the prostration of a 30 worthless renegade to religion and chivalry, to God and to his lady!”

So saying, she burst from him, tore her garment from his grasp, and left the tent.

The voice of Neville, at the same time, summoned him from without. Exhausted and stupefied by the distress he had undergone during this interview, from which he could only have extricated himself by breach 5 of the engagement which he had formed with King Richard, the unfortunate knight staggered rather than walked after the English baron, till they reached the royal pavilion.

[After returning from his visit to Edith's tent with the 10 letter of Saladin, the dumb Nubian slave (Sir Kenneth) finds that Sir Thomas Gilsland has come back from a journey, and that he has brought with him the king's favourite minstrel, Blondel. The evening is spent in the king's tent listening to the songs of Blondel, who accompanies himself on a harp. 15 As the ladies withdraw, Richard asks Edith what reply is to be made to Saladin's proposal, and Edith again indignantly refuses to consider the proposed marriage.]

CHAPTER XXII.

ON the subsequent morning, Richard was invited to a conference by Philip of France, in which the latter, 20 with many expressions of his high esteem for his brother of England, communicated to him, in terms extremely courteous, but too explicit to be misunderstood, his positive intention to return to Europe, and to the cares of his kingdom, as entirely despairing of future success 25 in their undertaking with their diminished forces and civil discords. Richard remonstrated, but in vain; and when the conference ended he received without surprise a manifesto from the Duke of Austria, and several other

princes, announcing a resolution similar to that of Philip, and in no modified terms, assigning for their defection from the cause of the Cross the inordinate ambition and arbitrary domination of Richard of England. All hopes of continuing the war with any prospect of ultimate success were now abandoned, and Richard, while he shed bitter tears over his disappointed hopes of glory, was little consoled by the recollection that the failure was in some degree to be imputed to the advantages which he had given his enemies by his own hasty and imprudent temper.

“They had not dared to have deserted my father thus,” he said to De Vaux, in the bitterness of his resentment. “No slanders they could have uttered against so wise a king would have been believed in Christendom; whereas—fool that I am!—I have not only afforded them a pretext for deserting me, but even a colour for casting all the blame of the rupture upon my unhappy foibles.”

These thoughts were so deeply galling to the king that De Vaux was rejoiced when the arrival of an ambassador from Saladin turned his reflections into a different channel.

The station called the Diamond of the Desert was assigned for the place of conflict, as being nearly at an equal distance betwixt the Christian and Saracen camps. It was agreed that Conrade of Montserrat, the defendant, with his godfathers, the Archduke of Austria, and the Grand Master of the Templars, should appear there on the day fixed for the combat, with a hundred armed followers, and no more; that Richard of England and his brother Salisbury, who supported the accusation, should attend with the same number, to protect his champion; and that the Soldan should bring with him a guard of five hundred

chosen followers, a band considered as not more than equal to the two hundred Christian lances. Such persons of consideration as either party chose to invite to witness the contest were to wear no other weapons than their swords, 5 and to come without defensive armour. The Soldan undertook the preparation of the lists, and to provide accommodations and refreshments of every kind for all who were to assist at the solemnity; and his letters expressed, with much courtesy, the pleasure which he anticipated in 10 the prospect of a personal and peaceful meeting with the Melech Ric, and his anxious desire to render his reception as agreeable as possible.

On the day before that appointed for the combat, Conrade and his friends set off by daybreak to repair to the 15 place assigned, and Richard left the camp at the same hour and for the same purpose; but, as had been agreed upon, he took his journey by a different route, a precaution which had been judged necessary to prevent the possibility of a quarrel betwixt their armed attendants.

20 The good king himself was in no humour for quarrelling with any one. Nothing could have added to his pleasurable anticipations of a desperate and bloody combat in the lists, except his being in his own royal person one of the combatants; and he was half in charity again 25 even with Conrade of Montserrat. Lightly armed, richly dressed, and gay as a bridegroom on the eve of his nuptials, Richard caroled along by the side of Queen Berengaria's litter, pointing out to her the various scenes through which they passed, and cheering with tale and song the 30 bosom of the inhospitable wilderness. Berengaria could not help indulging some female fears when she found herself in the howling wilderness with so small an escort, which seemed almost like a moving speck on the bosom of the plain, and knew, at the same time, they were not so

distant from the camp of Saladin but what they might be in a moment surprised and swept off by an overpowering host of his fiery footed cavalry, should the Pagan be faithless enough to embrace an opportunity thus tempting. But when she hinted these suspicions to Richard, he ⁵ repelled them with displeasure and disdain. "It were worse than ingratitude," he said, "to doubt the good faith of the generous Soldan."

"We must be near the station," said King Richard; "and yonder cavalier is one of Saladin's outposts. Me-¹⁰ thinks I hear the noise of the Moorish horns and cymbals. Get you into order, my hearts, and form yourselves around the ladies soldier-like and firmly."

They advanced accordingly in close and firm order, till they surmounted the line of low sandhills, and came in ¹⁵ sight of the appointed station, when a splendid, but at the same time a startling, spectacle awaited them.

The Diamond of the Desert, so lately a solitary fountain, distinguished only amid the waste by solitary groups of palm-trees, was now the centre of an encampment, the ²⁰ embroidered flags and gilded ornaments of which glittered far and wide, and reflected a thousand rich tints against the setting sun. The coverings of the large pavilions were of the gayest colours, scarlet, bright yellow, pale blue, and other gaudy and gleaming hues, and the tops of their ²⁵ pillars, or tent-poles, were decorated with golden pomegranates and small silken flags. A number of Arabs and Kurds, fully corresponding to the extent of the encampment, were hastily assembling, each leading his horse in his hand, and their muster was accompanied by an ³⁰ astonishing clamour of their noisy instruments of martial music, by which, in all ages, the warfare of the Arabs has been animated.

They soon formed a deep and confused mass of

dismounted cavalry in front of their encampment, when, at the signal of a shrill cry, which arose high over the clangour of the music, each cavalier sprang to his saddle. A cloud of dust, arising at the moment of this manœuvre, 5 hid from Richard and his attendants the camp, the palm-trees, and the distant ridge of mountains, as well as the troops whose sudden movement had raised the cloud, and, ascending high over their heads, formed itself into the fantastic forms of writhed pillars, domes, and minarets. 10 Another shrill yell was heard from the bosom of this cloudy tabernacle. It was the signal for the cavalry to advance, which they did at full gallop, disposing themselves as they came forward so as to come in at once on the front, flanks, and rear of Richard's little bodyguard, 15 who were thus surrounded, and almost choked, by the dense clouds of dust enveloping them on each side, through which were seen alternately, and lost, the grim forms and wild faces of the Saracens, brandishing and tossing their lances in every possible direction, with the wildest cries 20 and halloos, and frequently only reining up their horses when within a spear's length of the Christians, while those in the rear discharged over the heads of both parties thick volleys of arrows. One of these struck the litter in which the queen was seated, who loudly screamed, and the red 25 spot was on Richard's brow in an instant.

“ Ha ! St. George,” he exclaimed, “ we must take some order with this infidel scum ! ”

But Edith, whose litter was near, thrust her head out, and, with her hand holding one of the shafts, exclaimed— 30 “ Royal Richard, beware what you do ! See, these arrows are headless ! ”

“ Noble, sensible wench ! ” exclaimed Richard. “ By Heaven, thou shamest us all by thy readiness of thought and eye. Be not moved, my English hearts,” he exclaimed

to his followers. "Their arrows have no heads; and their spears, too, lack the steel points. It is but a wild welcome, after their savage fashion, though doubtless they would rejoice to see us daunted or disturbed. Move onward, slow and steady."

The little phalanx moved forward accordingly, accompanied on all sides by the Arabs.

As they had advanced nearly halfway towards the camp, King Richard and his suite forming, as it were, the nucleus round which this tumultuary body of horse-¹⁰ men howled, whooped, skirmished, and galloped, creating a scene of indescribable confusion, another shrill cry was heard, on which all those irregulars who were on the front and upon the flanks of the little body of Europeans wheeled off, and, forming themselves into a long and deep ¹⁵ column, followed with comparative order and silence in the rear of Richard's troop. The dust began now to dissipate in their front, when there advanced to meet them, through that cloudy veil, a body of cavalry of a different and more regular description, completely armed ²⁰ with offensive and defensive weapons, and who might well have served as a bodyguard to the proudest of Eastern monarchs. This splendid troop consisted of five hundred men, and each horse which it contained was worth an earl's ransom. The riders were Georgian and Circassian ²⁵ slaves in the very prime of life; their helmets and hauberks were formed of steel rings, so bright that they shone like silver; their vestures were of the gayest colours, and some of cloth of gold or silver; the sashes were twisted with silk and gold, their rich turbans ³⁰ were plumed and jewelled, and their sabres and poniards, of Damascene steel, were adorned with gold and gems on hilt and scabbard.

This splendid array advanced to the sound of military

music, and when they met the Christian body, they opened their files to the right and left, and let them enter between their ranks. Richard now assumed the foremost place in his troop, aware that Saladin himself was approaching.
5 Nor was it long when, in the centre of his bodyguard, surrounded by his domestic officers, came the Soldan, with the look and manners of one on whose brow Nature had written, This is a king! In his snow-white turban, vest, and wide Eastern trousers, wearing a sash of scarlet silk, 10 without any other ornament, Saladin might have seemed the plainest-dressed man in his own guard. But closer inspection discerned in his turban that inestimable gem which was called by the poets the Sea of Light; the diamond on which his signet was engraved, and which 15 he wore in a ring, was probably worth all the jewels of the English crown, and a sapphire which terminated the hilt of his canjiar was not of much inferior value. It should be added that, to protect him from the dust, which in the vicinity of the Dead Sea resembles the finest ashes, 20 or perhaps out of Oriental pride, the Soldan wore a sort of veil attached to his turban, which partly obscured the view of his noble features. He rode a milk-white Arabian, which bore him as if conscious and proud of his noble burden.

25 There was no need of further introduction. The two heroic monarchs, for such they both were, threw themselves at once from horseback, and the troops halting and the music suddenly ceasing, they advanced to meet each other in profound silence, and, after a courteous inclination on either side, they embraced as brethren and equals. 30 The pomp and display upon both sides attracted no further notice—no one saw aught save Richard and Saladin, and they too beheld nothing but each other. The looks with which Richard surveyed Saladin were, however, more

intently curious than those which the Soldan fixed upon him ; and the Soldan also was the first to break silence.

“ The Melech Ric is welcome to Saladin as water to this desert. I trust he hath no distrust of this numerous array. Excepting the armed slaves of my household, those 5 who surround you with eyes of wonder and of welcome are, even the humblest of them, the privileged nobles of my thousand tribes.”

“ And these are all nobles of Araby ? ” said Richard, looking round.

“ They claim such rank,” said Saladin ; “ but, though numerous, they are within the conditions of the treaty, and bear no arms but the sabre—even the iron of their lances is left behind.”

“ Noble Saladin,” said Richard, “ suspicion and thou 15 cannot exist on the same ground. Seest thou,” pointing to the litters, “ I too have brought some champions with me, though armed, perhaps, in breach of agreement, for bright eyes and fair features are weapons which cannot be left behind.”

The Soldan, turning to the litters, made an obeisance as lowly as if looking towards Mecca, and kissed the sand in token of respect.

“ Nay,” said Richard, “ they will not fear a closer encounter, brother. Wilt thou not ride towards their 25 litters, and the curtains will be presently withdrawn ? ”

“ That may Allah prohibit ! ” said Saladin, “ since not an Arab looks on who would not think it shame to the noble ladies to be seen with their faces uncovered.”

“ Thou shalt see them, then, in private, my royal 30 brother,” answered Richard.

“ To what purpose ? ” answered Saladin mournfully. “ Thy last letter was, to the hopes which I had entertained, like water to fire ; and wherefore should I again

light a flame which may indeed consume, but cannot cheer me? But will not my brother pass to the tent which his servant hath prepared for him?"

He led the way accordingly to a splendid pavilion, 5 where was everything that royal luxury could devise. De Vaux, who was in attendance, then removed the *chappe* (*capa*), or long riding-cloak, which Richard wore, and he stood before Saladin in the close dress which showed to advantage the strength and symmetry of his 10 person, while it bore a strong contrast to the flowing robes which disguised the thin frame of the Eastern monarch. It was Richard's two-handed sword that chiefly attracted the attention of the Saracen, a broad, straight blade, the seemingly unwieldy length of which 15 extended well-nigh from the shoulder to the heel of the wearer.

"Had I not," said Saladin, "seen this brand flaming in the front of battle, like that of Azrael, I had scarce believed that human arm could wield it. Might I request 20 to see the Melech Ric strike one blow with it in peace, and in pure trial of strength?"

"Willingly, noble Saladin," answered Richard: and, looking around for something whereon to exercise his strength, he saw a steel mace, held by one of the attendants, the handle being of the same metal, and about an 25 inch and a half in diameter. This he placed on a block of wood.

The glittering broadsword, wielded by both his hands, rose aloft to the king's left shoulder, circled round his 30 head, descended with the sway of some terrific engine, and the bar of iron rolled on the ground in two pieces, as a woodsman would sever a sapling with a hedging-bill.

"By the head of the Prophet, a most wonderful

blow!" said the Soldan, critically and accurately examining the iron bar which had been cut asunder; and the blade of the sword was so well tempered as to exhibit not the least token of having suffered by thefeat it had performed. He then took the king's hand, 5 and, looking on the size and muscular strength which it exhibited, laughed as he placed it beside his own, so lank and thin, so inferior in brawn and sinew.

The Soldan presently said, "Something I would fain attempt, though wherefore should the weak show their 10 inferiority in presence of the strong? Yet each land hath its own exercises, and this may be new to the Melech Ric." So saying, he took from the floor a cushion of silk and down, and placed it upright on one end. "Can thy weapon, my brother, sever that 15 cushion?" he said to King Richard.

"No, surely," replied the king. "No sword on earth, were it the Excalibur of King Arthur, can cut that which opposes no steady resistance to the blow."

"Mark, then," said Saladin; and, tucking up the 20 sleeve of his gown, showed his arm, thin indeed and spare, but which constant exercise had hardened into a mass consisting of naught but bone, brawn, and sinew. He unsheathed his scimitar, a curved and narrow blade, which glittered not like the swords of the Franks, but 25 was, on the contrary, of a dull blue colour, marked with ten millions of meandering lines, which showed how anxiously the metal had been welded by the armourer. Wielding this weapon, apparently so inefficient when compared to that of Richard, the Soldan 30 stood resting his weight upon his left foot, which was slightly advanced; he balanced himself a little as if to steady his aim, then stepping at once forward, drew the scimitar across the cushion, applying the edge so

dexterously, and with so little apparent effort, that the cushion seemed rather to fall asunder than to be divided by violence.

“Now, in good faith, my brother,” said Richard, 5 “thou art even matchless at the trick of the sword, and right perilous were it to meet thee! Still, however, I put some faith in a downright English blow, and what we cannot do sleight we eke out by strength. Nevertheless, in truth thou art as expert in inflicting wounds 10 as my sage Hakim in curing them. I trust I shall see the learned leech. I have much to thank him for, and had brought some small present.”

As he spoke, Saladin exchanged his turban for a Tartar cap. He had no sooner done so than De Vaux 15 opened at once his extended mouth and his large round eyes, and Richard gazed with scarce less astonishment, while the Soldan spoke in a grave and altered voice: “The sick man, sayeth the poet, while he is yet infirm, knoweth the physician by his step; but when he is 20 recovered, he knoweth not even his face when he looks upon him.”

“And it was through thy intercession,” said Richard, “that yonder Knight of the Leopard was saved from death, and by thy artifice that he revisited my camp 25 in disguise?”

“Even so,” replied Saladin. “I was physician enough to know that unless the wounds of his bleeding honour were stanch'd, the days of his life must be few. His disguise was more easily penetrated than I had expected 30 from the success of my own.”

“An accident,” said King Richard (probably alluding to the circumstance of his applying his lips to the wound of the supposed Nubian), “let me first know that his skin was artificially discoloured; and that hint once taken,

detection became easy, for his form and person are not to be forgotten. I confidently expect that he will do battle on the morrow."

"He is full in preparation, and high in hope," said the Soldan. "I have furnished him with weapons and 5 horse, thinking nobly of him from what I have seen under various disguises."

"Knows he now," said Richard, "to whom he lies under obligation?"

"He doth," replied the Saracen. "I was obliged to 10 confess my person when I unfolded my purpose."

"And confessed he ought to you?" said the King of England.

"Nothing explicit," replied the Soldan; "but from much that passed between us, I conceive his love is too 15 highly placed to be happy in its issue."

"And thou knowest that his daring and insolent passion crossed thine own wishes?" said Richard.

"I might guess so much," said Saladin; "but his passion had existed ere my wishes had been formed, and, 20 I must now add, is likely to survive them."

The Saracen monarch departed from King Richard's tent, and having indicated to him, rather with signs than with speech, where the pavilion of the queen and her attendants was pitched, he went to receive the Marquis of 25 Montserrat and his attendants, for whom, with less goodwill, but with equal splendour, the magnificent Soldan had provided accommodations. The most ample refreshments, both in the Oriental and after the European fashion, were spread before the royal and princely guests of Saladin, each 30 in their own separate pavilion. Ere Richard had finished his meal, the ancient Omrah, who had brought the Soldan's letter to the Christian camp, entered with a plan of the ceremonial to be observed on the succeeding day of combat.

The king then addressed himself to settle the articles of combat, which cost a considerable time, as it was necessary on some points to consult with the opposite parties as well as with the Soldan.

5 They were at length finally agreed upon, and adjusted by a protocol in French and in Arabian, which was subscribed by Saladin as umpire of the field, and by Richard and Leopold as guarantees for the two combatants. As the Omrah took his final leave of King Richard for the 10 evening, De Vaux entered.

“The good knight,” he said, “who is to do battle to-morrow, requests to know whether he may not to-night pay duty to his royal godfather?”

15 “Hast thou seen him, De Vaux?” said the king, smiling; “and didst thou know an ancient acquaintance?”

“By our Lady of Lanercost,” answered De Vaux, “there are so many surprises and changes in this land, that my poor brain turns. I scarce knew Sir Kenneth 20 of Scotland, till his good hound, that had been for a short while under my care, came and fawned on me; and even then I only knew the tyke by the depth of his chest, the roundness of his foot, and his manner of baying.”

25 “Thou art better skilled in brutes than men, De Vaux,” said the king.

“I will not deny,” said De Vaux, “I have found them oft-times the honester animals.”

“But to the present gear—is the good knight well 30 armed and equipped?”

“Fully, my liege, and nobly,” answered De Vaux. “I know the armour well: it is that which the Venetian commissary offered your highness, just ere you became ill, for five hundred bezants.”

“And he hath sold it to the infidel Soldan, I warrant me, for a few ducats more, and present payment. These Venetians would sell the Sepulchre itself!”

“The armour will never be borne in a nobler cause,” said De Vaux.

“Thanks to the nobleness of the Saracen, not to the avarice of the Venetians. Tell me,” added Richard, “rather, for it is of interest, hath the knight a confessor?”

“He hath,” answered De Vaux; “the hermit of 10 Engaddi, who erst did him that office when preparing for death, attends him on the present occasion, the fame of the duel having brought him thither.”

“Tis well,” said Richard; “and now for the knight’s request. Say to him, Richard will receive him when the 15 discharge of his devoir beside the Diamond of the Desert shall have atoned for his fault beside the Mount of St. George; and as thou passest through the camp, let the queen know I will visit her pavilion.”

When the king reached the pavilion of his queen, 20 he found it guarded by those unhappy officials whom Eastern jealousy places around the zenana.

The blacks lowered their pikes and swords to King Richard, and bent their eyes on the ground, as if unworthy to look upon him. In the interior of the pavilion 25 he found Thomas de Vaux in attendance on the queen. While Berengaria welcomed the minstrel Blondel, King Richard spoke for some time secretly and apart with his fair kinswoman.

At length, “Are we still foes, my fair Edith?” he said 30 in a whisper.

“No, my liege,” said Edith, in a voice just so low as not to interrupt the music. “None can bear enmity against King Richard, when he deigns to show himself,

as he really is, generous and noble, as well as valiant and honourable."

So saying, she extended her hand to him and the king kissed it in token of reconciliation.

CHAPTER XXIII.

5 It had been agreed, on account of the heat of the climate, that the judicial combat, which was the cause of the present assemblage of various nations at the Diamond of the Desert, should take place at one hour after sunrise. The wide lists, which had been constructed under the inspection of the Knight of the Leopard, inclosed a space of hard sand, which was one hundred and twenty yards long by forty in width. They extended in length from north to south, so as to give both parties the equal advantage of the rising sun. Saladin's royal seat was erected on the 15 western side of the inclosure, just in the centre, where the combatants were expected to meet in mid encounter. Opposed to this was a gallery with closed casements, so contrived that the ladies, for whose accommodation it was erected, might see the fight without being themselves exposed to view. At either extremity of the lists was a barrier, which could be opened or shut at pleasure. Thrones had been also erected, but the archduke, perceiving that his was lower than King Richard's, refused to occupy it; and Cœur de Lion, who would have submitted to much ere any formality should have interfered with the combat, readily agreed that the sponsors, as they were called, should remain on horseback during the fight. At one extremity of the lists were placed the followers

of Richard, and opposed to them were those who accompanied the defender, Conrade. Around the throne destined for the Soldan were ranged his splendid Georgian Guards, and the rest of the inclosure was occupied by Christian and Mohammedan spectators. 5

Long before daybreak, the lists were surrounded by even a larger number of Saracens than Richard had seen on the preceding evening. When the first ray of the sun's glorious orb arose above the desert, the sonorous call, "To prayer! to prayer!" was poured forth by the Soldan himself, and answered by others whose rank and zeal entitled them to act as muezzins. It was a striking spectacle to see them all sink to earth, for the purpose of repeating their devotions, with their faces turned to Mecca. 15

Soon after this the noise of timbrels was heard, at the sound of which the whole Saracen cavaliers threw themselves from their horses and prostrated themselves, as if for a second morning prayer. This was to give an opportunity to the queen, with Edith and her attendants, to pass from the pavilion to the gallery intended for them. Fifty guards of Saladin's seraglio escorted them, with naked sabres, whose orders were to cut to pieces whomsoever, were he prince or peasant, should venture to gaze on the ladies as they passed, or even presume to raise his head until the cessation of the music should make all men aware that they were lodged in their gallery, not to be gazed on by the curious eye. 25

Meantime the sponsors of both champions went, as was their duty, to see that they were duly armed and prepared for combat. The Archduke of Austria was in no hurry to perform this part of the ceremony, having had rather an unusually severe debauch upon wine the preceding evening. But the Grand Master of the Temple,

more deeply concerned in the event of the combat, was early before the tent of Conrade of Montserrat.

“Come, noble marquis,” said the Templar, “rouse up your courage. In an hour’s time thou shalt stand victorious in the lists, or confess thee in thy helmet like a valiant knight.”

“Alas! Grand Master,” answered Conrade, “all augurs ill for this affair. The strange discovery by the instinct of a dog, the revival of this Scottish knight, who comes into the lists like a spectre—all betokens evil.”

“Pshaw,” said the Templar, “I have seen thee bend thy lance boldly against him in sport, and with equal chance of success. Think thou art but in a tournament, and who bears him better in the tilt-yard than thou? Come, squires and armourers, your master must be accoutred for the field.”

The attendants entered accordingly, and began to arm the marquis.

“What morning is without?” said Conrade.

“The sun rises dimly,” answered a squire.

“Thou seest, Grand Master,” said Conrade, “naught smiles on us.”

“Thou wilt fight the more coolly, my son,” answered the Templar. “Thank Heaven, that hath tempered the sun of Palestine to suit thine occasion.”

Thus jested the Grand Master; but his jests had lost their influence on the harassed mind of the marquis, and, notwithstanding his attempts to seem gay, his gloom communicated itself to the Templar.

“This craven,” he thought, “will lose the day in pure faintness and cowardice of heart, which he calls tender conscience. But come what will, he must have no other confessor than myself: our sins are too much in common, and he might confess my share with his own.”

While these thoughts passed through his mind, he continued to assist the marquis in arming, but it was in silence.

The hour at length arrived, the trumpets sounded, the knights rode into the lists armed at all points, and mounted like men who were to do battle for a kingdom's honour. They wore their visors up, and, riding around the lists three times, showed themselves to the spectators. Both were goodly persons, and both had noble countenances. But there was an air of manly confidence on the brow of the Scot, a radiance of hope, which amounted even to cheerfulness, while, although pride and effort had recalled much of Conrade's natural courage, there lowered still on his brow a cloud of ominous despondence.

A temporary altar was erected just beneath the gallery occupied by the queen, and beside it stood the hermit in the dress of his Order, as a Carmelite friar. Other Churchmen were also present. To this altar the challenger and defender were successively brought forward, conducted by their respective sponsors. Dismounting before it, each knight avouched the justice of his cause by a solemn oath on the Evangelists, and prayed that his success might be according to the truth or falsehood of what he then swore. They also made oath, that they came to do battle in knightly guise, and with the usual weapons, disclaiming the use of spells, charms, or magical devices, to incline victory to their side. The challenger pronounced his vow with a firm and manly voice, and a bold and cheerful countenance. When the ceremony was finished, the Scottish knight looked at the gallery, and bent his head to the earth, as if in honour of those invisible beauties which were inclosed within; then, loaded with armour as he was, sprang to the saddle without the use of the stirrup, and made his courser carry him in a succession of carakoels to

his station at the eastern extremity of the lists. Conrade also presented himself before the altar with boldness enough; but his voice, as he took the oath, sounded hollow, as if drowned in his helmet. The lips with which 5 he appealed to Heaven to adjudge victory to the just quarrel grew white as they uttered the impious mockery. As he turned to remount his horse, the Grand Master approached him closer, as if to rectify something about the sitting of his gorget, and whispered—

10 "Coward and fool! recall thy senses, and do me this battle bravely, else, by Heaven, shouldst thou escape him, thou escapest not *me!*"

The savage tone in which this was whispered perhaps completed the confusion of the marquis's nerves, for he 15 stumbled as he made to horse; and though he recovered his feet, sprang to the saddle with his usual agility, and displayed his address in horsemanship as he assumed his position opposite to the challenger's, yet the accident did not escape those who were on the watch for omens which 20 might predict the fate of the day.

The priests, after a solemn prayer that God would show the rightful quarrel, departed from the lists. The trumpets of the challenger then rang a flourish, and a herald-at-arms proclaimed at the eastern end of the lists, 25 "Here stands a good knight, Sir Kenneth of Scotland, champion for the royal King Richard of England, who accuseth Conrade, Marquis of Montserrat, of foul treason and dishonour done to the said king."

The esquires of the combatants now approached, and 30 delivered to each his shield and lance, assisting to hang the former around his neck, that his two hands might remain free, one for the management of the bridle, the other to direct the lance.

The shield of the Scot displayed his old bearing, the

leopard, but with the addition of a collar and broken chain, in allusion to his late captivity. The shield of the marquis bore, in reference to his title, a serrated and rocky mountain. Each shook his lance aloft, as if to ascertain the weight and toughness of the unwieldy 5 weapon, and then laid it in the rest. The sponsors, heralds, and squires now retired to the barriers, and the combatants sat opposite to each other, face to face, with couched lance and closed visor, the human form so completely inclosed that they looked more like statues of 10 molten iron than beings of flesh and blood. The silence of suspense was now general: men breathed thicker, and their very souls seemed seated in their eyes, while not a sound was to be heard save the snorting and pawing of the good steeds, who, sensible of what was about to 15 happen, were impatient to dash into career. They stood thus for perhaps three minutes, when, at a signal given by the Soldan, a hundred instruments rent the air with their brazen clamours, and each champion striking his horse with the spurs and slackening the rein, the horses started 20 into full gallop, and the knights met in mid space with a shock like a thunderbolt. The victory was not in doubt —no, not one moment. Conrade, indeed, showed himself a practised warrior; for he struck his antagonist knightly in the midst of his shield, bearing his lance so straight 25 and true that it shivered into splinters from the steel spear-head up to the very gauntlet. The horse of Sir Kenneth recoiled two or three yards and fell on his haunches, but the rider easily raised him with hand and rein. But for Conrade there was no recovery. Sir Ken- 30 neth's lance had pierced through the shield, through a plated corselet of Milan steel, through a *secret*, or coat of linked mail, worn beneath the corselet, had wounded him deep in the bosom, and borne him from his saddle,

leaving the truncheon of the lance fixed in his wound. The sponsors, heralds, and Saladin himself, descending from his throne, crowded around the wounded man; while Sir Kenneth, who had drawn his sword ere yet he discovered 5 his antagonist was totally helpless, now commanded him to avow his guilt. The helmet was hastily unclosed, and the wounded man, gazing wildly on the skies, replied—

“What would you more? God hath decided justly—I am guilty. But there are worse traitors in the camp 10 than I. In pity to my soul, let me have a confessor!”

He revived as he uttered these words.

“The talisman, the powerful remedy, royal brother!” said King Richard to Saladin.

“The traitor,” answered the Soldan, “is more fit to be 15 dragged from the lists to the gallows by the heels than to profit by its virtues; and some such fate is in his look,” he added, after gazing fixedly upon the wounded man, “for, though his wound may be cured, yet Azrael’s seal is on the wretch’s brow.”

20 “Nevertheless,” said Richard, “I pray you do for him what you may, that he may at least have time for confession. Slay not soul and body! To him one half-hour of time may be worth more, by ten thousandfold, than the life of the oldest patriarch.”

25 “My royal brother’s wish shall be obeyed,” said Saladin. “Slaves, bear this wounded man to our tent.”

“Do not so,” said the Templar, who had hitherto stood gloomily looking on in silence. “The royal Duke of Austria and myself will not permit this unhappy 30 Christian prince to be delivered over to the Saracens, that they may try their spells upon him. We are his sponsors, and demand that he be assigned to our care.”

“That is, you refuse the certain means offered to recover him?” said Richard.

"Not so," said the Grand Master, recollecting himself.
"If the Soldan useth lawful medicines, he may attend the patient in my tent."

"Do so, I pray thee, good brother," said Richard to Saladin, "though the permission be ungraciously yielded. 5 But now to a more glorious work. Sound, trumpets! shout, England! in honour of England's champion!"

Drum, clarion, trumpet, and cymbal rang forth at once, and the deep and regular shout which for ages has been the English acclamation sounded, amidst the 10 shrill and irregular yells of the Arabs, like the diapason of the organ amid the howling of a storm. There was silence at length.

"Brave Knight of the Leopard," resumed Cœur de Lion, "thou hast shown that the Ethiopian *may* change 15 his skin and the leopard his spots, though clerks quote Scripture for the impossibility. Yet I have more to say to you when I have conducted you to the presence of the ladies, the best judges and best rewarders of deeds of chivalry." 20

The Knight of the Leopard bowed assent.

"And thou, princely Saladin, will also attend them. I promise thee our queen will not think herself welcome, if she lacks the opportunity to thank her royal host for her most princely reception." 25

Saladin bent his head gracefully, but declined the invitation.

"I must attend the wounded man," he said. "The leech leaves not his patient more than the champion the lists, even if he be summoned to a bower like those of 30 Paradise."

"At noon," said the Soldan, as he departed, "I trust ye will all accept a collation under the black camel-skin tent of a chief of Kurdistan."

The same invitation was circulated among the Christians, comprehending all those of sufficient importance to be admitted to sit at a feast made for princes.

“Hark!” said Richard, “the timbrels announce that our queen and her attendants are leaving their gallery. Come, we will to the pavilion, and lead our conqueror thither in triumph.”

Blondel tuned his harp to its boldest measure, to welcome the introduction of the victor into the pavilion of Queen Berengaria. He entered, supported on either side by his sponsors, Richard and William Longsword, and knelt gracefully down before the queen, though more than half the homage was silently rendered to Edith, who sat on her right hand.

“Unarm him, my mistresses,” said the king, whose delight was in the execution of such chivalrous usages. “Let Beauty honour Chivalry! Undo his spurs, Berengaria! Queen though thou be, thou owest him what marks of favour thou canst give. Unlace his helmet, Edith! By this hand thou shalt, wert thou the proudest Plantagenet of the line, and he the poorest knight on earth!”

Both ladies obeyed the royal commands, Berengaria with bustling assiduity, as anxious to gratify her husband’s humour, and Edith blushing and growing pale alternately, as slowly and awkwardly she undid, with Longsword’s assistance, the fastenings which secured the helmet to the gorget.

“And what expect you from beneath this iron shell?” said Richard, as the removal of the casque gave to view the noble countenance of Sir Kenneth, his face glowing with recent exertion, and not less so with present emotion. “What think ye of him, gallants and beauties?” said Richard. “Doth he resemble an Ethiopian slave, or doth he present the face of an obscure and nameless

adventurer? No, by my good sword! Here terminate his various disguises. He hath knelt down before you unknown save by his worth: he arises, equally distinguished by birth and by fortune. The adventurous knight, Kenneth, arises David, Earl of Huntingdon, 5 Prince Royal of Scotland!"

There was a general exclamation of surprise, and Edith dropped from her hand the helmet, which she had just received.

"Yes, my masters," said the king, "it is even so. Ye 10 know how Scotland deceived us when she proposed to send this valiant earl, with a bold company of her best and noblest, to aid our arms in this conquest of Palestine, but failed to comply with her engagements. This noble youth, under whom the Scottish Crusaders were to have 15 been arrayed, thought foul scorn that his arm should be withheld from the holy warfare, and joined us at Sicily with a small train of devoted and faithful attendants which was augmented by many of his countrymen to whom the rank of their leader was unknown. The con- 20 fidants of the royal prince had all, save one old follower, fallen by death, when his secret, but too well kept, had nearly occasioned my cutting off, in a Scottish adventurer, one of the noblest hopes of Europe. Why did you not mention your rank, noble Huntingdon, when endangered 25 by my hasty and passionate sentence?"

"I did you not that injustice, royal Richard," answered the Earl of Huntingdon; "but my pride brooked not that I should avow myself Prince of Scotland in order to save my life endangered for default of loyalty. And, moreover, 30 I had made my vow to preserve my rank unknown till the Crusade should be accomplished; nor did I mention it save *in articulo mortis*, and under the seal of confession, to yonder reverend hermit."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE hour of noon now approached, and Saladin waited to receive the princes of Christendom in a tent which, but for its large size, differed little from that of the ordinary shelter of the common Kurdman, or Arab; yet beneath 5 its ample and sable covering was prepared a banquet after the most gorgeous fashion of the East, extended upon carpets of the richest stuffs, with cushions laid for the guests.

Expecting the approach of his princely guests, the 10 Soldan, imbued, as most were, with the superstitions of his time, paused over a horoscope and corresponding scroll, which had been sent to him by the hermit of Engaddi when he departed from the camp.

“Strange and mysterious science,” he muttered to 15 himself, “which, pretending to draw the curtain of futurity, misleads those whom it seems to guide, and darkens the scene which it pretends to illuminate! Who would not have said that I was that enemy most dangerous to Richard whose enmity was to be ended by marriage with his kins-20 woman! Yet it now appears that a union betwixt this gallant earl and the lady will bring about friendship betwixt Richard and Scotland, an enemy more dangerous than I.”

He spoke to the dwarf Nectabanus, who rushed into 25 the tent fearfully agitated, with each strange and disproportioned feature wrenched by horror into still more extravagant ugliness—his mouth open, his eyes staring, his hands, with their shrivelled and deformed fingers, widely expanded.

30 “What now?” said the Soldan, sternly.

“*Accipe hoc!*” groaned out the dwarf.

“ Ha ! say’st thou ? ” answered Saladin.

“ *Accipe ejus!* ” replied the panic-struck creature, unconscious, perhaps, that he repeated the same words as before.

“ Hence ! I am in no vein for foolery,” said the 5 emperor.

“ Nor am I further fool,” said the dwarf, “ than to make my folly help out my wits to earn my bread, poor helpless wretch ! Hear me, hear me, great Soldan ! ”

“ Nay, if thou hast actual wrong to complain of,” said 10 Saladin, “ fool or wise, thou art entitled to the ear of a king. Retire hither with me ; ” and he led him into the inner tent.

Whatever their conference related to, it was soon broken off by the fanfare of the trumpets, announcing the 15 arrival of the various Christian princes, whom Saladin welcomed to his tent with a royal courtesy well becoming their rank and his own ; but, chiefly, he saluted the young Earl of Huntingdon, and generously congratulated him upon prospects which seemed to have interfered with and 20 overclouded those which he had himself entertained.

“ But think not,” said the Soldan, “ thou noble youth, that the Prince of Scotland is more welcome to Saladin than was Kenneth to the solitary Ilderim when they met in the desert, or the distressed Ethiop to the Hakim Adon- 25 bec. A brave and generous disposition like thine hath a value independent of condition and birth, as the cool draught which I here proffer thee is as delicious from an earthen vessel as from a goblet of gold.”

The Earl of Huntingdon made a suitable reply, grate- 30 fully acknowledging the various important services he had received from the generous Soldan ; but when he had pledged Saladin in the bowl of sherbet which the Soldan had proffered to him, he could not help remarking, with

a smile, “the brave cavalier, Ilderim, knew not of the formation of ice, but the munificent Soldan cools his sherbet with snow.”

“Wouldst thou have an Arab or a Kurdman as wise as a Hakim?” said the Soldan. “He who puts on a disguise must make the sentiments of his heart and the learning of his head accord with the dress which he assumes. I desired to see how a brave and single-hearted cavalier of Frangistan would conduct himself in debate with such a chief as I then seemed; and I questioned the truth of a well-known fact, to know by what arguments thou wouldest support thy assertion.”

While they were speaking, the Archduke of Austria, who stood a little apart, was struck with the mention of iced sherbet, and took with pleasure and some bluntness the deep goblet, as the Earl of Huntingdon was about to replace it.

“Most delicious!” he exclaimed, after a deep draught, which the heat of the weather, and the feverishness following the debauch of the preceding day, had rendered doubly acceptable. He sighed as he handed the cup to the Grand Master of the Templars. Saladin made a sign to the dwarf, who advanced and pronounced with a harsh voice the words *Accipe hoc!* The Templar started, like a steed who sees a lion under a bush beside the pathway; yet instantly recovered, and to hide, perhaps, his confusion, raised the goblet to his lips; but those lips never touched that goblet’s rim. The sabre of Saladin left its sheath as lightning leaves the cloud. It was waved in the air—and the head of the Grand Master rolled to the extremity of the tent, while the trunk remained for a second standing, with the goblet still clenched in its grasp, then fell, the liquor mingling with the blood that spurted from the veins.

There was a general exclamation of treason, and Austria, nearest to whom Saladin stood with the bloody sabre in his hand, started back as if apprehensive that his turn was to come next. Richard and others laid hand on their swords.

5

“Fear nothing, noble Austria,” said Saladin, as composedly as if nothing had happened, “nor you, royal England, be wroth at what you have seen. Not for his manifold treasons;—not for the attempt which, as may be vouched by his own squire, he instigated against 10 King Richard’s life;—not that he pursued the Prince of Scotland and myself in the desert, reducing us to save our lives by the speed of our horses;—not that he had stirred up the Maronites to attack us upon this very occasion, had I not brought up unexpectedly so many 15 Arabs as rendered the scheme abortive;—not for any or all of these crimes does he now lie there, although each were deserving such a doom;—but because, scarce half an hour ere he polluted our presence, as the simoom empoisons the atmosphere, he poniarded his comrade and 20 accomplice, Conrade of Montserrat, lest he should confess the infamous plots in which they had both been engaged.”

“How! Conrade murdered? And by the Grand Master, his sponsor and most intimate friend!” exclaimed Richard. “Noble Soldan, I would not doubt thee; yet 25 this must be proved, otherwise——”

“There stands the evidence,” said Saladin, pointing to the terrified dwarf. “Allah, who sends the firefly to illuminate the night season, can discover secret crimes by the most contemptible means.”

30

The Soldan proceeded to tell the dwarf’s story, which amounted to this.—In his foolish curiosity, or, as he partly confessed, with some thoughts of pilfering, Nectabanus had strayed into the tent of Conrade, which had been

deserted by his attendants, some of whom had left the encampment to carry the news of his defeat to his brother, and others were availing themselves of the means which Saladin had supplied for revelling. The wounded man
5 slept under the influence of Saladin's wonderful Talisman, so that the dwarf had opportunity to pry about at pleasure, until he was frightened into concealment by the sound of a heavy step. He skulked behind a curtain, yet could see the motions and hear the words of the Grand Master,
10 who entered, and carefully secured the covering of the pavilion behind him. His victim started from sleep, and it would appear that he instantly suspected the purpose of his old associate, for it was in a tone of alarm that he demanded wherefore he disturbed him.

15 "I come to confess and to absolve thee," answered the Grand Master.

Of their further speech the terrified dwarf remembered little, save that Conrade implored the Grand Master not to break a wounded reed, and that the Templar struck
20 him to the heart with a Turkish dagger, with the words *Accipe hoc*—words which long afterwards haunted the terrified imagination of the concealed witness.

25 "I verified the tale," said Saladin, "by causing the body to be examined; and I made this unhappy being, whom Allah hath made the discoverer of the crime, repeat in your own presence the words which the murderer spoke; and you yourselves saw the effect which they produced upon his conscience."

The Soldan paused, and the King of England broke
30 silence.

"If this be true, as I doubt not, we have witnessed a great act of justice, though it bore a different aspect. But wherefore in this presence? Wherefore with thine own hand?"

“ I had designed otherwise,” said Saladin; “ but had I not hastened his doom, it had been altogether averted, since, if I had permitted him to taste of my cup, as he was about to do, how could I, without incurring the brand of inhospitality, have done him to death as he deserved? 5 Had he murdered my father, and afterwards partaken of my food and my bowl, not a hair of his head could have been injured by me. But enough of him: let his carcass and his memory be removed from amongst us.”

The body was carried away, and the marks of the 10 slaughter obliterated or concealed.

But the Christian princes felt that the scene which they had beheld weighed heavily on their spirits, and although, at the courteous invitation of the Soldan, they assumed their seats at the banquet, yet it was with the 15 silence of doubt and amazement. The spirits of Richard alone surmounted all cause for suspicion or embarrassment. Yet he too seemed to ruminate on some proposition, as if he were desirous of making it in the most insinuating and acceptable manner which was 20 possible. At length he drank off a large bowl of wine, and, addressing the Soldan, desired to know whether it was not true that he had honoured the Earl of Huntingdon with a personal encounter.

Saladin answered with a smile that he had proved 25 his horse and his weapons with the heir of Scotland, as cavaliers are wont to do with each other when they meet in the desert, and modestly added that, though the combat was not entirely decisive, he had not, on his part, much reason to pride himself on the event. The Scot, on 30 the other hand, disclaimed the attributed superiority, and wished to assign it to the Soldan.

“ Enough of honour thou hast had in the encounter,” said Richard, “ and I envy thee more for that than for the

smiles of Edith Plantagenet, though one of them might reward a bloody day's work. But what say you, noble princes? Is it fitting that such a royal ring of chivalry should break up without something being done for future 5 times to speak of? What is the overthrow and death of a traitor to such a fair garland of honour as is here assembled, and which ought not to part without witnessing something more worthy of their regard? How say you, princely Soldan? What if we two should now, and 10 before this fair company, decide the long-contended question for this land of Palestine, and end at once these tedious wars? Yonder are the lists ready, nor can Paynimrie ever hope a better champion than thou. I, unless 15 worthier offers, will lay down my gauntlet in behalf of Christendom, and, in all love and honour, we will do mortal battle for the possession of Jerusalem."

There was a deep pause for the Soldan's answer. His cheek and brow coloured highly, and it was the opinion of many present that he hesitated whether he should accept 20 the challenge. At length he said—

" Fighting for the Holy City against those whom we regard as idolaters, and worshippers of stocks and stones and graven images, I might confide that Allah would strengthen my arm; or if I fell beneath the sword of 25 the Melech Ric, I could not pass to Paradise by a more glorious death. But Allah has already given Jerusalem to the true believers, and it were a tempting the God of the Prophet to peril, upon my own personal strength and skill, that which I hold securely by the superiority of my 30 forces."

" If not for Jerusalem, then," said Richard, in the tone of one who would entreat a favour of an intimate friend, " yet for the love of honour, let us run at least three courses with grinded lances?"

“Even this,” said Saladin, half smiling at Cœur de Lion’s affectionate earnestness for the combat, “even this I may not lawfully do. The master places the shepherd over the flock, not for the shepherd’s own sake, but for the sake of the sheep. Had I a son to hold the sceptre when I 5 fell, I might have had the liberty, as I have the will, to brave this bold encounter; but your own Scripture sayeth that, when the herdsman is smitten, the sheep are scattered.”

“Thou hast had all the fortune,” said Richard, turning to the Earl of Huntingdon with a sigh. “I would have 10 given the best year in my life for that one half-hour beside the Diamond of the Desert!”

The chivalrous extravagance of Richard awakened the spirits of the assembly, and, when at length they arose to depart, Saladin advanced and took Cœur de Lion by the 15 hand.

“Noble King of England,” he said, “we now part, never to meet again. That your league is dissolved, no more to be reunited, and that your native forces are far too few to enable you to prosecute your enterprise, is as well 20 known to me as to yourself. I may not yield you up that Jerusalem which you so much desire to hold. It is to us, as to you, a Holy City. But whatever other terms Richard demands of Saladin shall be as willingly yielded as yonder fountain yields its waters. Ay, and the same should be as 25 frankly afforded by Saladin, if Richard stood in the desert with but two archers in his train!”

The next day saw Richard’s return to his own camp, and in a short space afterwards the young Earl of Huntingdon was espoused by Edith Plantagenet. The Soldan sent, 30 as a nuptial present on this occasion, the celebrated TALISMAN; but though many cures were wrought by means of it in Europe, none equalled in success and

celebrity those which the Soldan achieved. It is still in existence, having been bequeathed by the Earl of Huntingdon to a brave knight of Scotland, Sir Simon of the Lee, in whose ancient and highly honoured family it is still 5 preserved; and, although charmed stones have been dismissed from the modern pharmacopœia, its virtues are still applied to for stopping blood, and in cases of canine madness.

Our story closes here, as the terms on which Richard 10 relinquished his conquests are to be found in every history of the period.

NOTE S

CHAPTER I.

Page 1, 1. 1. **Syria**, the part of Asiatic Turkey south of Asia Minor and extending eastward to the river Euphrates and the Arabian desert. Palestine is included in it.

Page 1, 1. 2. **Knight of the Red Cross.** The badge of the English crusaders was a cross of red cloth embroidered on the right shoulder of their cloaks. The French crusaders wore a badge of white cloth.

Page 1, 1. 5. **Dead Sea.** This lake is about forty-six miles long and from five to ten broad. It is situated in the south of Palestine, in a hollow 1300 feet below the Mediterranean. It receives the waters of the Jordan and some other small rivers, and, as it has no outlet, its surface level varies with the amount of water received and the extent of evaporation. Its waters are clear, but very salt, since it contains about seven times as much saline matter as ordinary sea-water. Its great salinity causes it to be so dense that a man easily floats in it. Only low forms of life live in its waters, but its surroundings are not so desolate as Scott describes, for birds fly over its surface, and some plants and animals inhabit its rocky shores.

Page 1, 1. 6. **Lake Asphaltites**, another name for the Dead Sea, from the asphalt or bitumen sometimes found on its surface or on its shores.

Page 1, 1. 12. **cities of the plain**, Sodom and Gomorrah, cities in the vale of Siddim, destroyed on account of their wickedness (Gen. xiv.).

Page 2, 1. 10. **accoutrements of his horse**, the harness and armour of his horse.

Page 2, 1. 11. **linked mail.** At this time a knight wore over his stuff garments a coat of *chain mail*, composed of steel rings interlinked so as to form a network, and lined with leather. This coat of mail was called a *hauberk*, and reached down as far as the knees, and covered the head except the face. On his head he also wore a heavy steel helmet, the front of which was movable and provided with bars or holes for seeing and breathing. His legs and feet were also covered with armour of chain mail. The armour or defensive covering was also extended to the horse. It was not until the end of the thirteenth century that chain armour gave place to plate armour, so that Scott is not quite accurate in speaking of any plated parts of the armour as being in use at this time.

Page 2, 1. 12. **gauntlets**, iron gloves with fingers covered with small plates.

Page 2, l. 15. **helmet**, a defensive covering for the head made of metal.

Page 2, l. 18. **hauberk**, coat of mail.

Page 2, l. 22. **falchion**, a short, broad, curved sword.

Page 2, l. 23. **poniard**, a small dagger.

Page 2, l. 25. **lance**, a weapon consisting of a long wooden shaft furnished with a sharp-pointed steel head.

Page 2, l. 27. **pennoncelle**, a small pennon or flag attached to the end of the lance.

Page 2, l. 29. **cumbrous equipment**, heavy and burdensome outfit.

Page 2, l. 29. **surcoat**, a loose sleeveless robe worn over the coat of mail and usually embroidered with the wearer's coat-of-arms.

Page 3, l. 1. **couchant**, lying down with the head raised.

Page 3, l. 13. **front-stall**, the metal covering of a horse's brow.

Page 3, l. 16. **fabulous unicorn**, an animal represented as having one long horn growing out of the middle of its forehead; no such animal exists except in fable. Hence the adjective *fabulous*.

Page 3, l. 18. **panoply**, complete armour, armour from head to foot.

Page 3, l. 29. **squire**, attendant on a knight.

Page 4, l. 19. **turban**, an Eastern head-dress.

Page 4, l. 19. **caftan**, a Turkish vest or undercoat.

Page 4, l. 21. **Saracen**, a name given to the Mohammedans of the East, and afterwards applied to any Mohammedan enemy of the Christians of the Middle Ages, such as Turks and Arabs.

Page 4, l. 23. **infidel**, unbeliever. Christians regarded Mohammedans as unbelievers, and these in turn so regarded Christians.

Page 4, l. 24. **barb**, a horse of Barbary (Morocco) breed.

Page 4, l. 29. **mettle**, spirit, courage.

Page 5, l. 18. **momentum**, force due to a moving body.

Page 5, l. 32. **elusory**, deceptive, illusory.

Page 5, l. 34. **mace**, a club with a heavy head and short handle.

Page 6, l. 2. **Emir**, chieftain, ruling prince.

Page 6, l. 4. **missile**, a weapon to be thrown, as a lance or javelin.

Page 6, l. 6. **buckler**, a small shield for warding off blows.

Page 6, l. 21. **with great address**, with great skill.

Page 6, l. 33. **had recourse to this artifice**, made use of this trick.

Page 7, l. 10. **Moslem**. A Moslem, or Mussulman, is a believer in the religion of Mohammed, one who professes submission (Islam) to the will of God.

Page 7, l. 12. **menacing attitude**, threatening position.

Page 7, l. 13. **truce**, a period of peace during warfare; an armistice.

Page 7, l. 14. **lingua franca**, literally the Frank language: a mixed language of Italian with Arabic, etc., used by the Crusaders in the East.

Page 7, l. 21. **The Prophet**. Mohammed, or Mahomet (Arabic from Mahmonid), born at Mecca in Arabia, A.D. 570, died at Medina, in Arabia, 632. He was the founder of the Moslem religion, and the

creator of a great empire in the East. His religion teaches that there is but one God (Allah), and that Mahomet is his chief prophet. Jesus is regarded as a lesser prophet. The doctrines of Mahomet, some of which are taken from the Old Testament, were taken down by his disciples, and afterwards gathered together in a book written in Arabic, and called *The Koran*. There are still many Mohammedans in Turkey, Egypt, Asia Minor, and other parts of Asia. Prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage to the holy city, Mecca, are the cardinal religious duties of a Mohammedan. All alcoholic drinks and the flesh of certain animals (as the swine) are forbidden.

Page 7, l. 22. **Nazarene**, a follower of Jesus of Nazareth, a Christian.

Page 7, l. 31. **Allah**, an Arabic name for God.

Page 7, l. 33. **wend we**, let us go.

CHAPTER II.

Page 8, l. 23. **fetlock**, the tuft of hair growing behind, just above a horse's hoof, literally the *lock* of hair on the *feet*.

Page 9, l. 7. **Frank**, the name given by the Eastern people, not only to the French, but to all Western Europeans.

Page 9, l. 8. **fable**. This word means here a deceptive story or a fiction.

Page 9, l. 10. **dubbed knight**, struck by the sword when made knight. See Introduction.

Page 9, l. 15. **water as solid as the crystal**. The Saracen warrior speaks as if he had not seen ice.

Page 9, l. 32. **refulgence**, brilliancy, reflexion of a bright light.

Page 10, l. 34. **Gothic**, belonging to the Goths, a powerful and barbaric Teutonic (Germanic) race that overspread Europe in the third and fourth centuries, and invaded the Roman empire.

Page 11, l. 32. **brawn**, muscle, brawny, muscular.

Page 12, l. 7. **ivory of his deserts**. Ivory was imported from India by the Arabs through the deserts.

Page 12, l. 11. **Damascus blade**, a sword or scimitar made at Damascus, which was formerly celebrated for the manufacture of these steel weapons.

Page 12, l. 20. **abstemious**, sparing in use of food and drink.

Page 12, l. 29. **Moslemah**, used as a plural of Moslem. Moslems abstain from hog's flesh and from intoxicating drinks; they are allowed to have several wives, who live in a private part of the dwelling called the harem.

Page 13, l. 1. **Balsora and Bagdad**. Formerly great cities of the East on the river Tigris.

Page 13, l. 18. **Holy Sepulchre**, the place in Jerusalem containing the rock sepulchre in which Christ's body is said to have been laid between His burial and resurrection. A church was built over the place in early times. The present Church of the Holy Sepulchre was built in 1087. The real site of the tomb is, however, doubtful.

Page 13, l. 28. **Caaba**, a temple within the great mosque at Mecca, which is regarded with great veneration by Mohammedans.

Page 14, l. 1. **pass**, a paper given by some one in authority which gives the right to a safe passage; a passport.

Page 14, l. 4. **soldan**, old form of *sultan*, the Arab title of a sovereign.

Page 15, l. 18. **black covering**, the tents of the Arabs were black.

Page 15, l. 17. **Engaddi**, a place in the wilderness of Judah, near the middle of the western shore of the Dead Sea. David and his men sought a refuge from Saul at Engaddi, or En-gedi (1 Sam. xxiii., xxiv.).

Page 15, l. 20. **convoy**, an escort, an accompanying force.

CHAPTER III.

Page 15, l. 24. **pagan**, here used of one who is not a Christian. It comes from a Latin word *paganus*, rustic, or as a noun, a villager, because the dwellers in the country villages were the last to give up their idolatries and superstitions. In a wider sense it denotes one who is not a worshipper of the true God, a *heathen*. The Mohammedans are not, however, heathens.

Page 16, l. 31. **Kurdistan**, the country of the Kurds, a region to the east of Eastern Asiatic Turkey.

Page 17, l. 12. **chivalry**, knightly conduct. See Introduction. The word *chivalry* is also used to denote the knights themselves, e.g. in Chapter V., "the choicest of Europe's chivalry" means the best knights of Europe.

Page 17, l. 28. **crescent**. The moon in its first quarter, when it has the form of a bow of light terminating in points, is said to be a crescent moon. A crescent moon is the emblem of the Mohammedan Turks, as the cross is the emblem of Christians.

Page 18, l. 2. **hirsute**, hairy, shaggy.

Page 18, l. 3. **fauns**, deities represented with horns and goat's feet.

Page 18, l. 3. **silvans**, fabled deities of the woods (Lat. *silva*, a wood forest).

Page 18, l. 4. **apparition**, a remarkable appearance; a ghostly appearance.

Page 18, l. 26. **Hamako**, a madman looked on as inspired.

Page 19, l. 1. **rencontre**, sudden contest or fight (also written *renounter*).

Page 20, l. 12. **gibe**, taunting words; sneer.

Page 20, l. 16. **anchorite**, a hermit; one who retires from society into a solitary place to avoid temptations; a recluse.

Page 20, l. 26. **Mahound**, a corruption of Mahomet.

Page 20, l. 26. **Termagaunt**, an imaginary deity with a violent temper, supposed to be worshipped by Mohammedans. The word *termagant* is now used of a violent and scolding person.

Page 21, l. 28. **niche**, cavity or recess in a wall.

Page 22, l. 7. **sherbet**, a favourite cooling drink of the East.

Page 23, l. 11. **immunities**, privileges, freedom from certain obligations.

Page 23, l. 20. **vigils**, nightly devotions; watches kept in a church.

CHAPTER IV.

Page 24, l. 22. **gourd**, a plant of the cucumber family that bears a large thick-rind fruit.

Page 25, l. 17. **password**, a secret word or saying by which a friend may be distinguished from an enemy and allowed to pass.

Page 26, l. 18. **Gothic church**. The distinguishing feature of Gothic buildings is the pointed style with pointed arches. This style of architecture owes in reality nothing to the Gothic peoples.

Page 26, l. 24. **relic**, an object held in reverence and veneration on account of its sacred associations.

Page 26, l. 25. **sanctity**, sacredness.

Page 26, l. 27. **shrine**, an altar or other sacred place.

Page 27, l. 3. **blazoned** or **emblazoned**, illuminated or decorated.

Page 27, l. 3. **Vera Crux** (Lat.), True Cross.

Page 27, l. 4. **Gloria Patri** (Lat.), Glory to the Father, etc.

Page 27, l. 12. **orisons**, prayers.

Page 27, l. 18. **cerements**, cloths dipped in melted wax (Lat. *cera*, wax), in which dead bodies are wrapped when embalmed.

Page 27, l. 31. **lauds**, the early morning service (Lat. *laudo*, I praise).

Page 28, l. 14. **censters**, vessels in which incense is burnt.

Page 28, l. 20. **scapularies**, hooded cloaks worn by certain monks and nuns.

Page 28, l. 25. **rosaries**, strings of beads on which Catholics count the prayers they repeat.

Page 28, l. 32. **white-stoled**, a stole is a kind of surplice.

Page 29, l. 5. **novices**, beginners in any work or duty; a monk or nun who is still in a state of trial is also called a novice.

Page 29, l. 21. **fortuitous**, happening by chance.

Page 30, l. 1. **sacristans**, officers of a church who take charge of the vestments and sacred vessels of the church.

Page 30, l. 26. **samite**, a kind of rich heavy silk.

Page 30, l. 33. **conspicuous**, striking, prominent.

Page 32, l. 2. **ecstatic**, enraptured. The noun *ecstasy* denotes intense delight or rapturous emotion.

Page 32, l. 10. **crypt**, hidden recess; underground room of a church used for secret service or for burial.

CHAPTER V.

Page 32, l. 24. **Jean d'Arc**, or Acre, a town on the coast of Syria about eighty miles north of Jerusalem.

Page 32, l. 24. **Ascalon**, a town on the coast of Syria about ninety miles from Acre.

Page 34, l. 2. **acquiring laurels**, gaining fame and honour; a crown of laurel leaves was awarded to a conqueror in ancient times.

Page 34, l. 22. **Thomas de Vaux**, Sir Thomas de Multon, Lord of Gisland, a district on the borders of Northumberland and Cumberland.

Page 35, l. 1. **devotees**, persons entirely given up to religious services.

Page 35, l. 11. **pilgrimage**, a journey by a pilgrim to a sacred place.

Page 35, l. 22. **reparation**, something done to repair a wrong; amends.

Page 35, l. 23. **Christendom**, the parts of the world where the Christian religion prevails.

Page 35, l. 23. **Heathenesse**, the parts of the world which do not profess Christianity.

Page 36, l. 8. **En arrière** (Fr.), back!

Page 36, l. 8. **En avant** (Fr.), forward!

Page 36, l. 18. **Templars**, a society or order of knights who devoted themselves to the protection of pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem. Though they were soldiers, they also took the vows of monks, promising to give obedience to their superiors and to live a life of poverty. They took their name from their early head-quarters in a palace at Jerusalem (the so-called Temple of Solomon). The head of the order was termed the Grand Master. So corrupt did this order become that it was abolished in 1812.

Page 36, l. 24. **Beau-Seant**, a term applied to the black-and-white banner of the Templars.

Page 36, l. 31. **necromancer**, one who practises magic.

Page 36, l. 34. **Hospitallers of St. John**. The Knights Hospitalers of St. John were another monkish order of knights. They provided food and support for pilgrims in the Holy Land. Both this order and the Templars became rich and powerful, and are represented in "The Talisman" as taking sides against Richard in the disputes that arose among the leaders of the Crusades.

Page 37, l. 18. **popinjay**, a parrot; a fop.

Page 37, l. 14. **versatile**, variable, changeable.

Page 37, l. 15. **doubtlet**, a kind of short coat.

Page 37, l. 22. **lelies**, war-cries of the Moslems.

CHAPTER VI.

Page 38, l. 6. **shalm**, an old wind instrument something like a clarionet.

Page 38, l. 20. **indifferently well**, not particularly well, but yet not ill; tolerably well.

Page 38, l. 22. **port**, carriage, bearing.

Page 39, l. 4. **leech**, a physician.

Page 40, l. 33. **los**, praise, fame.

Page 41, l. 5. **obtestation**, declaration, protestation.

- Page 42, l. 19. **buskins**, a kind of half-boot laced to the ankle.
 Page 43, l. 19. **Issa ben Miriam**, Jesus, son of Mary (Arabic).
 Page 43, l. 20. **muezzin**, a Mohammedan official who proclaims the hours of prayer.
 Page 43, l. 24. **minaret**, the turret or tower of a mosque.
 Page 43, l. 25. **mosque**, a Mohammedan temple.
 Page 44, l. 4. **credentials**, letters of authority; proofs of a claim to confidence.

CHAPTER VII.

- Page 44, l. 21. **devoir**, duty, especially the duty of a knight.
 Page 44, l. 22. **fool's bauble**, a staff with a fool's head having asses' ears at one end and hung round with little bells. A fool also wore a high-peaked cap with bells.
 Page 44, l. 24. **overweening**, conceited.
 Page 44, l. 25. **audacious**, bold.
 Page 44, l. 25. **presumption**, the act of taking too much on one's self; over-confidence.
 Page 44, l. 26. **liege**. A liege lord is one to whom another is bound in service; a feudal superior: a liege man is one bound to serve his liege lord, and one who has claim to protection from his superior.
 Page 45, l. 7. **venerie**, hunting, the chase.
 Page 45, l. 16. **cote**, to pass, outpace.
 Page 46, l. 6. **mêlée**, a fight in which the fighters are mixed in a confused mass.
 Page 46, l. 8. **errant knights**, knights wandering in search of adventures.
 Page 46, l. 20. **atabals**, drums of the Moors.
 Page 46, l. 31. **Melec Ric**, King Richard.
 Page 47, l. 7. **Azrael**, the angel of death.
 Page 47, l. 13. **Frangistan**, the country of the Franks, western Europe.
 Page 48, l. 7. **weal**, welfare, well-being.
 Page 48, l. 16. **murrain**, plague.
 Page 48, l. 26. **prelate**, a minister of the Church in high office, who holds authority over others as a bishop or archbishop.
 Page 49, l. 26. **Ulema**, a name given to Moslem Church officials.
 Page 49, l. 30. **ocular proof**, proof that can be seen (Lat. *oculus*, an eye).
 Page 50, l. 11. **astrolabe**, an instrument used by old astronomers in finding the position of the sun and stars.
 Page 50, l. 12. **oracle**, something which utters wisdom; an infallible guide.
 Page 50, l. 32. **vassal**, subject, one dependent on a superior lord.
 Page 51, l. 4. **Benedictio Domini sit vobiscum** (Lat.), "May the blessing of the Lord be with you."
 Page 51, l. 20. **elixir**, a medicine of marvellous power; a magical drink.

CHAPTER VIII.

- Page 53, l. 7. **too ambitious love**, love which is given to one far above the lover's station in life.
- Page 53, l. 23. **Lombards**. At this time the merchants of Lombardy were the chief money-lenders of Europe.
- Page 54, l. 29. **dissemblers**, persons who conceal their opinions; deceivers.
- Page 54, l. 33. **negotiations**, acts of treating about a settlement or the arrangement of some matter.
- Page 54, l. 33. **confederates**, those united in a compact, agreement, or league.
- Page 55, l. 3. **conjured**, solemnly entreated or appealed to.
- Page 55, l. 18. **St. Andrew**, the patron saint of Scotland.
- Page 55, l. 19. **perturbation**, disturbance; disquiet of mind.
- Page 55, l. 22. **Carmelite nuns**, nuns of the order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.
- Page 55, l. 27. **confessional**, the part of the church where a priest hears confessions.
- Page 55, l. 32. **bevy**, group, company.
- Page 56, l. 12. **enamoured of**, in love with.
- Page 57, l. 1. **dignitaries**, persons of rank and dignity.
- Page 57, l. 6. **magnanimous**, great of mind and heart.
- Page 57, l. 6. **ally**, one united in a compact; a confederate.
- Page 57, l. 17. **presently**, at the present instant; instantly.
- Page 57, l. 19. **colleague**, partner in work or office; co-worker
- Page 57, l. 28. **oriental**, eastern.
- Page 59, l. 6. **medicated**, imbued with healing matter.

CHAPTER IX.

- Page 60, l. 15. **ducal sway**, the rule of a duke.
- Page 60, l. 24. **gait**, manner of walking; carriage.
- Page 61, l. 5. **controversy**, dispute, debate.
- Page 61, l. 12. **ardour**, eagerness.
- Page 62, l. 12. **Teutonic**, belonging to the Germanic races.
- Page 62, l. 34. **Tokay**, a small town in Hungary famous for its wine.
- Page 63, l. 9. **Spruch-sprecher**, Ger. *spruch*, a speech; *sprecher*, a speaker.
- Page 63, l. 27. **Hoff-narr**, Ger. *hof*, a court; *narr*, a fool.
- Page 64, l. 14. **genista** (Lat.), broom-plant. A sprig of broom was worn as a badge by the Count of Anjou, the ancestor of the Plantagenet kings.
- Page 64, l. 21. **Minnesingers**, German poets and minstrels of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, who composed and sang love-poems (Ger. *minne*, love).

Page 64, l. 22. **the joyeuse science**, the art of minstrelsy.

Page 65, l. 6. **cognisance**, badge or crest to make known the wearer.

Page 65, l. 18. **generalissimo**, commander-in-chief.

Page 65, l. 34. **suzerain**, a feudal lord or baron.

Page 66, l. 10. **Holy Roman Empire**, the German-Roman empire of western and central Europe began with Charlemagne (Charles the Great), who was crowned emperor by the Pope, at Rome, in A.D. 800. It finally disappeared in 1806.

Page 66, l. 16. **Eagle of Austria**, the Austrian banner which displayed an eagle with two heads and outspread wings.

Page 66, l. 18. **Kaiser**, emperor; a form of the word Cæsar.

CHAPTER X.

Page 67, l. 1. **critical hour**, the time in an illness which forms the turning-point for good or evil.

Page 67, l. 12. **coffers**, money-chests.

Page 67, l. 17. **bezants**, gold coins worth about nine shillings.

Page 67, l. 25. **gratuity**, gift; reward for service.

Page 68, l. 21. **inebriety**, drunkenness.

Page 69, l. 17. **retinue**, train of followers.

Page 70, l. 14. **impeach**, accuse of wrong; call to account.

Page 71, l. 11. **inauspiciously**, unluckily, unfavourably.

Page 71, l. 24. **bills**, military weapons of the period having a broad hook-shaped blade attached to a long handle.

Page 71, l. 24. **partisans**, a long-handled cutting weapon.

Page 71, l. 32. **broil**, quarrel.

Page 72, l. 8. **a truce with your remonstrance**, let there be an end to your chiding.

Page 72, l. 8. **coil**, disturbance, confusion.

Page 72, l. 10. **foul indignity**, shameful insult.

Page 72, l. 28. **Oriflamme**, the ancient royal banner of France — a red banner with streaks of blue and gold.

Page 74, l. 16. **peremptory**, resolute, determined. A peremptory demand is one that must be obeyed.

Page 74, l. 21. **dubbed**, struck by the sword in conferring knighthood. See Introduction; "to dub" now means to give a name or title.

CHAPTER XI.

Page 76, l. 9. **Merlin**, an old British magician, mentioned in the stories of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table.

Page 76, l. 9. **Maugis**, an old British enchanter.

- Page 76, l. 17. **Sathanas**, Satan.
 Page 76, l. 21. **arblast**, cross-bow with steel bow and wooden stock from which arrows were shot.
 Page 76, l. 30. **crepit**, broken down in health and strength; weakened.
 Page 76, l. 34. **miniature of humanity**, little man.
 Page 77, l. 17. **puissance**, power, strength.
 Page 77, l. 30. **importunity**, persistent request; continual asking.
 Page 78, l. 1. **genii**, spirits, guiding power, (plural of *genius*); another plural in a different sense is *genituses*, persons of great mental power.
 Page 78, l. 10. **houri**, a nymph of the Mohammedan paradise.
 Page 78, l. 34. **list**, desire.
 Page 79, l. 1. **parley**, speak, talk.
 Page 81, l. 16. **labyrinth**, maze; intricate arrangement.
 Page 81, l. 25. **indecorum**, impropriety, improper conduct.

CHAPTER XII.

- Page 82, l. 6. **furtively**, secretly; like a thief.
 Page 83, l. 30. **leasing**, falsehood, lying, (see Psalm v. 6).
 Page 83, l. 32. **Libbard**, old spelling of *leopard*.
 Page 85, l. 22. **lured**, enticed, drawn away.
 Page 85, l. 34. **perdu** (Fr.), hidden.
 Page 86, l. 4. **ensconced**, concealed; covered with a sconce or fort.
 Page 86, l. 7. **malignity**, malice, deep-rooted enmity.
 Page 86, l. 25. **trained**, drawn away; Fr. *trainer*, to drag or draw.
 Page 87, l. 31. **reverie**, deep thought.

CHAPTER XIII.

- Page 89, l. 8. **plenitude**, fullness.
 Page 89, l. 16. **donative**, gift.
 Page 89, l. 21. **sovereign**, effective; said of medicines that produce their full purpose.
 Page 89, l. 21. **baleful**, harmful, injurious.
 Page 90, l. 7. **accessible**, capable of being approached or reached.
 Page 90, l. 18. **derisive incredulity**, mocking disbelief.
 Page 90, l. 24. **transient**, passing quickly.
 Page 90, l. 27. **St. George**. A Christian hero of the Middle Ages who was adopted as the patron saint of England in the fourteenth century.
 Page 91, l. 6. **curtal-axe**, a short sword, cutlass.
 Page 92, l. 5. **the fox William**, William the Lion, King of

Scotland, who was said to have promised knights for the Third Crusade and then to have failed to send them.

Page 92, l. 17. **crystal**, made of glass.

Page 92, l. 23. **pregnant example**, example full of meaning; significant example.

Page 93, l. 29. **provost**, an officer who brings offenders to punishment.

Page 93, l. 34. **mutilation**, cutting off limbs or important parts. A traitor's doom was to be hanged, drawn, and quartered.

Page 94, l. 7. **invocation**, calling in prayer.

Page 94, l. 13. **Carmelite friar**, one of the order of monks called Carmelites, or White Friars.

Page 95, l. 22. **stratagem**, scheme, plan.

CHAPTER XIV.

Page 96, l. 10. **chamberlains**, officers charged with the management of royal apartments.

Page 97, l. 12. **vehemence**, fervour, energy.

Page 97, l. 18. **jerkin**, a short close-fitting jacket.

Page 97, l. 27. **misanthropical**, man-hating.

Page 97, l. 30. **truculent**, fierce.

Page 98, l. 2. **grisly**, frightful, gruesome. The grisly attendant is the executioner.

Page 98, l. 15. **Heathenesse**, heathendom; the countries inhabited by heathens.

Page 98, l. 22. **sirrah**, a form of *sir*, often used with contempt.

Page 98, l. 32. **wench**, damsel; young woman; (used at this time in a respectful sense).

Page 99, l. 29. **rife**, prevalent, abundant.

Page 100, l. 11. **dallied**, played with.

Page 100, l. 23. **incense**, rouse to anger.

Page 100, l. 31. **camiscia**, a kind of linen dress.

Page 101, l. 18. **exculpate**, free from blame; clear from a charge.

Page 101, l. 33. **inculpate**, expose to blame; incriminate.

Page 102, l. 3. **venial**, that may be pardoned; pardonable; (Lat. *venia*, pardon).

Page 102, l. 21. **seal of confession**. Anything told to a priest at confession is regarded as secret, and must never be disclosed.

Page 102, l. 33. **Bayard**, a famous horse of incredible speed, described in an old romance.

Page 103, l. 2. **cowl**, hood attached to a monk's gown.

Page 103, l. 6. **macerated**, (1) to steep and make soft; (2) cause to grow lean and to waste.

Page 103, l. 12. **abhorrent**, detestable; hateful.

Page 103, l. 21. **tax our generosity**, make a claim on our noble kindness.

CHAPTER XV.

Page 104, l. 12. **Intelligences**, guardian angels, or other spiritual beings.

Page 105, l. 5. **mercurial**, fickle, changeable. Certain old observers of the stars created a kind of false science, called *astrology*, which declared that the heavenly bodies exerted an influence on human life. A person's temperament and disposition were said to depend on the planet under which he was born. Those born under Mercury became *mercurial*, or fickle; those under Jupiter, *jovial*, or merry; and those under Saturn, *saturnine*, or gloomy and morose.

Page 105, l. 7. **derogatory**, tending to lower or lessen.

Page 105, l. 20. **the great Creditor**, God, to whom we owe everything.

Page 106, l. 1. **talisman**, some object (as a stone, piece of metal, with or without mystic signs on it) which possesses a wonderful virtue as the power to heal diseases, to afford protection, avert misfortune, etc.; an amulet; a charm.

Page 106, l. 7. **commodious**, suitable, convenient.

Page 106, l. 17. **unclean animal**, a dog is unclean to Mohammedans.

Page 106, l. 25. **omen**, a sign or indication of some future event.

Page 106, l. 34. **virtuous**, here used in the sense of powerful; effective.

Page 106, l. 12. **Moussa ben Amram**, Moses, son of Amram. For the striking of the rock to obtain water, see Numbers xx. 7-11.

Page 108, l. 29. **pertinacity**, obstinacy; unyielding purpose.

Page 109, l. 24. **felony**, a wicked and treacherous deed.

Page 110, l. 7. **liege vassal**, subject bound to serve his sovereign lord.

CHAPTER XVI.

Page 110, l. 9. **emissary**, one sent on an errand or mission.

Page 110, l. 11. **brooked**, endured.

Page 110, l. 17. **all-hail**, approval; salutation.

Page 110, l. 25. **countenanced**, supported, abetted.

Page 111, l. 23. **confiteor** (Lat.), "I confess."

Page 111, l. 26. **culpa mea** (Lat.), "(It is) my fault."

Page 112, l. 32. **insinuating**, tending to win favour or confidence.

Page 113, l. 12. **unction**, fervour, warmth.

Page 113, l. 33. **lethargy**, inactivity and dullness.

Page 114, l. 2. **renegade**, one who turns from his religious faith and adopts another.

Page 114, l. 12. **privy-chamber**, private room.

Page 114, l. 22. **dishevelled**, disarranged.

CHAPTER XVII.

- Page 117, 1. 9. **equerry**, officer who superintends the horse.
 Page 117, 1. 14. **Nubian slave**, a black slave from Nubia, a country in Africa between Egypt and Abyssinia.
 Page 118, 1. 19. **Ysop**, Æsop, a famous writer of fables who lived in the sixth century, said to have been ugly and deformed.
 Page 118, 1. 19. **Isaack**, a famous Arabian musician of the ninth century.
 Page 118, 1. 20. **requital**, return.
 Page 118, 1. 24. **exquisite flavour**, delicious taste.
 Page 118, 1. 25. **Rustan**, a Persian hero.
 Page 118, 1. 27. **the lord of speech**, etc., a poetical way of saying that the tongue between his teeth possessed no power to speak; that the slave was dumb or mute.
 Page 119, 1. 1. **missive**, letter; thing sent.
 Page 119, 1. 7. **Prometheus** (Prō-mē'-thūs), a Grecian god who is said to have made man from clay, and to have stolen fire from heaven to give him life.
 Page 119, 1. 10. **thews and sinews**, muscles and tendons.
 Page 119, 1. 10. **symmetry**, due proportion of parts.
 Page 119, 1. 28. **nicety of address**, fine skill.
 Page 119, 1. 32. **knave**. This word originally meant a *boy*, then a *servant*, as here. It now means a deceitful fellow or a rogue.
 Page 120, 1. 11. **presently**, at once, instantly, (an older meaning of the word).
 Page 120, 1. 19. **feuds**, quarrels.
 Page 120, 1. 25. **brigandine**, a coat of mail formed of leather covered by thin iron plates.
 Page 120, 1. 26. **pavesse**, a large shield covering the whole body.
 Page 120, 1. 27. **reconnoitring**, making a survey or inspection before taking some action.
 Page 121, 1. 15. **marabout**, a fanatical Moslem saint.
 Page 121, 1. 15. **santon**, Eastern priest.
 Page 121, 1. 18. **contumely**, great contempt.

CHAPTER XVIII.

- Page 122, 1. 2. **yeomen**, attendants on a royal or noble person. The yeomen were small freeholders ranking as gentleman soldiers.
 Page 122, 1. 13. **ebriety**, drunkenness, intoxication, (almost the same as *inebriety*, the prefix *in* serving to intensify the meaning).
 Page 122, 1. 21. **Ethiopian**. Ethiopia was a country south of Egypt, that included Nubia and other parts inhabited by black-skinned races.
 Page 123, 1. 3. **Charegite**. Charegites were fanatical Moslems who were given to murdering opponents.
 Page 123, 1. 22. **carriion**, decaying flesh.
 Page 124, 1. 8. **Martlemas**, the feast of St. Martin, Nov. 11th;

called also *Martinmas*. Fairs were often held at this time for the sale of cattle and geese.

Page 124, l. 16. **expostulations**, reasons or speeches against something intended to be done; earnest objections.

Page 124, l. 19. **ridicule**, mocking words.

Page 124, l. 19. **remonstrances**, protests.

Page 125, l. 34. **wizard**, a dealer in magic.

Page 126, l. 12. **scroll**, writing in the form of a roll.

Page 126, l. 25. **opportunely**, seasonably, timely.

Page 126, l. 27. **expiate the affront**, atone for the insult.

Page 126, l. 31. **expurgation**, act of clearing from a charge.

Page 127, l. 9. **swart**, black, swarthy.

Page 127, l. 17. **guerdon**, reward.

Page 128, l. 9. **summary**, hasty.

CHAPTER XIX.

Page 128, l. 24. **retrogrades**, goes backward.

Page 130, l. 8. **decorum**, propriety, dignity.

Page 130, l. 14. **struck with singular despatch**, taken down with remarkable speed.

Page 130, l. 18. **cavalcade**, procession of persons on horseback or in carriages.

Page 131, l. 17. **prejudices**, judgments formed beforehand; usually unfavourable opinions.

Page 133, l. 28. **portentous**, marvellous, prodigious. This word also means ominous, foreboding evil.

Page 133, l. 33. **descant**, enlarge or dwell on; make abundant remarks.

Page 134, l. 5. **Borak**, a famous winged beast with the face of a man, emeralds for eyes, and jewels on its wings, that is said to have carried Mahomet through the air from Mecca to Jerusalem.

Page 134, l. 5. **Yemen**, a fertile part of Southern Arabia.

Page 135, l. 10. **hest**, command, behest.

Page 135, l. 11. **narcotic**, a substance or drink producing sleep.

Page 135, l. 22. **inanimate**, lifeless.

Page 136, l. 5. **punctually**, in every point (Lat. *punctum*, a point); (no reference to time here).

Page 136, l. 17. **varlet**, servant, attendant.

Page 137, l. 10. **vassal**, subject holding land on condition of rendering military service.

CHAPTER XX.

Page 137, l. 15. **peers**, nobles.

Page 137, l. 24. **amity**, friendship.

Page 137, l. 24. **protocol**, the first draft of a writing or document.

Page 137, l. 25. **spiritual dignitaries**, high officials of the church.

Page 137, l. 26. **bonnets**, coverings of the head.

Page 138, l. 2. **morion**, a form of helmet without a vizor not introduced into England until the sixteenth century.

Page 138, l. 7. **hose**, garments covering the lower part of the body and legs.

Page 138, l. 10. **woodcraft**, the chase; the sport of hunting or venerie.

Page 138, l. 18. **accessory to the theft**, concerned with it in some way.

Page 138, l. 22. **Gallic chivalry**, French knights.

Page 138, l. 27. **demeanour**, bearing; mode of acting.

Page 139, l. 7. **amphibious**, living a double life, *i.e.* as priest and soldier.

Page 139, l. 7. **caitiff**, wretch (literally *slave*).

Page 139, l. 20. **with some scorn**, Because Richard suspected that Leopold had stolen the banner.

Page 139, l. 27. **obeisance**, bow.

Page 140, l. 2. **Venetians**. At this time the state of Venice formed a republic that included not only the city of Venice but a large territory to the north and east of the city.

Page 140, l. 2. **Dalmatian**. Dalmatia is a strip of country along the north-east coast of the Adriatic.

Page 140, l. 18. **caracoled**, pranced and wheeled about.

Page 140, l. 34. **quarry**, hunted animal.

Page 141, l. 2. **stag of ten tynes**. Tynes are the points of a stag's antlers, and these increase in numbers with the age. A stag of ten tynes would be full grown and valuable.

Page 142, l. 6. **besmirched**, soiled.

Page 143, l. 18. **our own glove**. Throwing down the glove was the mode by which one knight challenged another to combat. (See Introduction.)

Page 143, l. 14. **appeal**, call, challenge.

Page 144, l. 4. **arbiter**, umpire.

CHAPTER XXI.

Page 144, l. 26. **canst well of woodcraft**, "knowest the rules of hunting well;" "can" is from a word meaning to know or be able.

Page 144, l. 28. **Tristrem**. Sir Tristrem was one of the knights of King Arthur's round table.

Page 145, l. 8. **conjecturally**, by guess.

Page 145, l. 9. **cavalier**, knight.

Page 145, l. 10. **augmentation**, increase.

Page 145, l. 24. **abortive**, failing; coming to nought.

Page 145, l. 34. **genuflection**, bending of the knee.

Page 146, l. 8. **taciturn**, silent.

Page 146, l. 38. **resentment**, feeling of anger and ill will for an offence.

Page 147, l. 21. **debonair**, polite, well-bred.

Page 148, l. 9. **servilely**, like a slave.

- Page 149, l. 2. **mortification**, annoyance and disappointment.
 Page 149, l. 8. **irony**, hidden sarcasm.
 Page 149, l. 15. **jongleur**, a wandering minstrel and story-teller, also a juggler.
 Page 149, l. 16. **deft**, skilful, clever.
 Page 149, l. 16. **transmutation**, change of one person or thing into another.
 Page 149, l. 31. **renegade**, one who denies his belief and changes his religion.
 Page 150, l. 4. **extricated**, freed.
 Page 150, l. 13. **Blondel**, a famous French troubadour or minstrel who was a friend and attendant of King Richard.

CHAPTER XXII.

- Page 150, l. 18. **subsequent**, following.
 Page 150, l. 22. **explicit**, plain, distinct.
 Page 150, l. 28. **manifesto**, declaration.
 Page 151, l. 4. **arbitrary domination**, independent and uncertain ruling.
 Page 151, l. 19. **foibles**, failings, weaknesses.
 Page 151, l. 20. **galling**, annoying, bitter.
 Page 152, l. 6. **lists**. See Introduction.
 Page 152, l. 10. **personal and peaceful meeting**. History gives no account of Saladin and Richard meeting together, though it suits Scott's purpose to tell of such a meeting.
 Page 152, l. 28. **litter**, a kind of couch hung between poles and carried by men or horses.
 Page 153, l. 6. **disdain**, scorn.
 Page 153, l. 31. **martial**, soldier-like.
 Page 154, l. 4. **manceuvre**, a movement made by troops to gain some end.
 Page 155, l. 9. **suite**, a company of attendants or followers.
 Page 155, l. 25. **Georgian and Circassian slaves**. Georgia and Circassia are districts near the Caucasus mountains.
 Page 156, l. 17. **canjar**, dagger.
 Page 159, l. 18. **Excalibur**, the famous sword of King Arthur.
 Page 159, l. 27. **meandering**, winding and turning.
 Page 160, l. 8. **sleight**, cunning, skill.
 Page 160, l. 8. **eke out**, to add to, make just sufficient.
 Page 161, l. 32. **omrah**, an officer of the court.
 Page 162, l. 1. **articles of combat**, regulations about the fight.
 Page 162, l. 6. **subscribed**, signed; literally *written under*.
 Page 162, l. 22. **tyke**, fellow; here refers to the dog.
 Page 162, l. 28. **gear**, here means affair, business.
 Page 162, l. 32. **commissary**, an officer who supplies provisions, etc., to any army.
 Page 163, l. 10. **erst**, formerly.
 Page 163, l. 21. **zenana**, the women's apartments.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Page 164, l. 26. **sponsors**, those who make themselves responsible for the duties of another ; in chivalry, the sureties of the combatants.

Page 165, l. 22. **seraglio**, (pr. se-räl-yo), a walled palace in which the ladies live.

Page 165, l. 33. **debauch**, excessive drinking.

Page 166, l. 7. **augurs**, indicates by signs or omens.

Page 166, l. 30. **craven**, coward.

Page 167, l. 7. **vizors**, the front movable piece of a helmet with holes for seeing and breathing.

Page 167, l. 14. **ominous despondence**, sadness and gloom that betokened evil to come.

Page 168, l. 9. **gorget**, armour for the throat.

Page 169, l. 8. **serrated**, notched like the edge of a saw.

Page 169, l. 32. **corselet**, armour worn on the front of the body.

Page 170, l. 1. **truncheon**, the head.

Page 171, l. 11. **diapason**, deep notes ; full tones.

Page 171, l. 33. **collation**, light meal.

Page 172, l. 4. **timbrels**, drums like tambourines.

Page 172, l. 29. **casque**, helmet.

Page 174, l. 14. **hostages**, persons kept as a pledge or security.

Page 174, l. 23. **commodity**, bundle.

Page 174, l. 1. **chopped**, changed about.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Page 176, l. 11. **horoscope**, a kind of map of the eastern part of the sky, used by astrologers, and showing the position of the heavenly bodies at a person's birth, from which the destiny of a person can be found.

Page 176, l. 11. **scroll**, writing.

Page 176, l. 31. **accipe hoc** (Lat.), "take this."

Page 177, l. 15. **fanfare**, flourish, showy display.

Page 177, l. 33. **pledged**, to *pledge* is to drink the health of a person.

Page 178, l. 2. **munificent**, highly generous.

Page 178, l. 11. **well-known fact**, viz. that water can become ice. See Chap. III., when the Saladin as Sheerkohf pretended not to know this.

Page 179, l. 10. **instigated**, urged ; stimulated to an action.

Page 179, l. 14. **Maronites**, a tribe of Eastern Christians.

Page 179, l. 19. **simum**, a hot suffocating wind that blows in African and Arabian deserts.

Page 179, l. 21. **accomplice**, companion in wrong-doing.

Page 179, l. 33. **pilfering**, stealing, petty thieving.

Page 181, l. 4. **brand of inhospitality**, without being marked as one who breaks the pledge of friendship to one who has been supplied with food or drink. Such a pledge is considered sacred by Eastern peoples.

Page 181, l. 11. **obliterated**, wiped out.

Page 183, l. 31. **espoused**, married.

Page 184, l. 6. **pharmacopœia**, a book used by druggists, containing an authorized list of drugs and medicines.

Page 184, l. 9. **The terms on which Richard relinquished his conquests.** Richard defeated Saladin in several battles, but when near Jerusalem was obliged, owing to quarrels among the Crusaders, to give up the project of reconquering the city. A truce was made with the Sultan by which Acre and the coast towns were to be left in the hands of the Christians, and permission was to be given to pilgrims to visit Jerusalem. Richard then set sail for home. Landing at the head of the Adriatic, he crossed over the Alps into the duchy of Leopold of Austria. Here he was recognized and cast into prison by the revengeful duke. After a time Leopold handed Richard over to the Emperor Henry VI. When his imprisonment became known in England a large sum of money was raised to ransom the King. He reached England again in 1194, after an absence of more than five years.

QUESTIONS ON “THE TALISMAN”

1. Give a short account of the encounter between Sir Kenneth and Sheerkohf at their first meeting in the desert. When is this encounter referred to again?
2. Describe, in your own words, what Sir Kenneth saw in the subterranean chapel at Engaddi.
3. Explain the following:—Knight of the Red Cross; linked mail; couchant; fabulous unicorn; truce; lingua franca; Saracen; Allah; dubbed knight; Holy Sepulchre; pagan; chivalry; Hamako; vigils; Gothic church; rosaries.
4. Write a short account of the Knights Templars and the Knights Hospitallers of St. John. Who was the Grand Master of the Knights Templars in 1191? Describe his character.
5. Who was El Hakim? How did he come to the English camp? How did he cure Richard of his fever?
6. Relate the events connected with the insult offered to the English banner by the Duke of Austria.
7. Explain the following:—Muezzin; minaret; fool’s bauble; veneerie; liege; ocular proof; vassal; Lombards; St. Andrew; astrolabe; Melech Ric; Emir; the Caaba.
8. How did it come to pass that the English banner was stolen from St. George’s Mount?
9. Explain how the banner thief was detected.
10. What causes led to jealousies and quarrels among the leaders of the Third Crusade?
11. Give some account of the institution and practices of knighthood.
12. Explain the following terms and phrases:—too ambitious love; Teutonie; minnesingers; the Holy Roman Empire; Kaiser; bezants; bills and partisans; Oriflamme; miniature of humanity; the fox William; mutilation.
13. How did the Nubian slave save the life of King Richard?
14. Mention some of the chief articles of the Mohammedan religion.
15. How did the Moslem physician prevail on Richard to spare Sir Kenneth’s life after being condemned to death?
16. Explain the following:—venial offence; wench; leech; mercurial; Vera Crux; confiteor; culpa mea; renegade; Ysop; Prometheus; marabout; Martlemas; expiate the affront; guerdon; devoir; Borak; stag of ten tynes.
17. Describe the meeting of the Christian and Saracen hosts at the Diamond of the Desert.

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18. Give an account of the tournament at the Diamond of the Desert.
19. Describe the modes in which Conrade of Montserrat and the Grand Master of the Templars came to violent deaths.
20. Explain the following:—hauberk; vizors; lance; scimitar; gauntlet; hose; woodcraft; Gallic chivalry; appeal; caracole; Excalibur; sponsors; horoscope; pharmacopœia.
21. Give the names of the places in Palestine mentioned in "The Talisman," and state the events connected with each.
22. Who is the hero of our story? Describe his character.
23. What are the "brilliant scenes" described in "The Talisman"?
24. Compare the characters of King Richard and Saladin.
25. What was the *talisman*? On what occasions was it used?
26. Who were—the Archbishop of Tyre; Nectabonus; and the marabout? What part does each take in the story?
27. Which character in the story pleases you most, and why? Which character is the most to be despised?
28. Contrast the characters of Philip of France and the Archduke of Austria.
29. Give some account of Berengaria of Navarre and Edith Plantagenet?
30. What parts do the following persons play in the story:—Sir Thomas de Vaux, the spruch-sprecher, and Blondel?
31. Under what disguises does Saladin appear in the story? When and where does Richard see through the disguises?
32. How far is "The Talisman" a romance of chivalry? What characters are entirely the invention of the author?
33. Relate, in your own words, the plot of "The Talisman."

THE END